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IN THOUGHT AND
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JOHN HOOPER.

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Short Lives of Christian Leaders in Thought and Action

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JOHN WYCLIF.

JOHN WYCLIF

(1324?–1384)

By
S. G. Green, D.D.

THE village of Wycliffe ("water-cliff"), on the northern boundary of Yorkshire, in the fair valley of the Tees, between Barnard Castle and Old Richmond, had since the Norman Conquest given its name to the family that inhabited its Manor-house. From this family sprang John of Wycliffe, or John Wyclif, born, it is said, at Spresswell, a neighbouring hamlet which has long disappeared, its site being occupied by ploughed fields. The year of his birth is uncertain; but he must have been at least sixty years old when he died in 1384. The date, therefore, generally assigned is 1324; it was probably a few years earlier.

Nothing whatever is known of Wyclif's parentage or early training. Near Rokeby, two or three miles higher up the valley, was the Abbey of Egglestone, where it is probable that he received the rudiments of instruction. At the age of fifteen or sixteen he proceeded to Oxford, nor do we find that he ever revisited his native village. In all his voluminous writings no autobiographical details have been discovered, nor had his many antagonists a single tale to tell, whether true or false, of his private life. As a student and a recluse he pursued his quiet way, and it is not until the year 1366, when he was more than forty years of age, that he comes fully into view, as the deepest thinker, the profoundest theologian, and perhaps the bravest spirit of his generation.

It was a memorable era for England and for Europe. The life of Wyclif included the long and eventful reign of Edward the Third (1327-1377), in which, more than in any preceding age, the English nation became consolidated into unity and power. The Parliament, which was now definitely divided into Lords and Commons, proved itself the true protector of the national interests and honour. The feudal system was gradually decaying; there were stirrings of life and thought among the masses, which were yet to lead to disastrous conflicts before the establishment of popular rights and individual freedom. A national literature began to be developed, although it was a hundred years before the invention of printing. Sir John Mandeville, "the father of English prose," wrote his *Travels* in 1356, and Chaucer, "the father of English poetry," published his earliest poems about ten years later. The English language was ordered by a statute of 1362 to be employed in the pleadings of the courts of law, "because the French tongue is much unknown." In the rivalry of nations, England had never been so formidable. Cressy had been won in 1346, Poitiers ten years afterwards. A little later, at the celebration of King Edward's fiftieth birthday, three kings offered their homage at his court—John of France, still in honourable captivity; David Bruce of Scotland, pleading for a mitigation of the terms on which he had been restored to his throne; and the king of Cyprus, to invoke the aid of England against Saracen aggression.

It is no wonder that national pride rose high, and that a spirit of resistance was aroused against that spiritual power which still claimed to control the mind and conscience of the people. The seat of the Papacy was now at Avignon. That the Pope should be under the protection of France was bitterly distasteful to England; and the prodigal expenditure of the Papal court in its new home imposed intolerable burdens upon the community. Impatience under oppression was thus combined with the growth of popular intelligence, and with the advance of the spirit of freedom, to seek a new and better order of things. And in the cloisters of studious Oxford at length the voice was heard which gave utterance to this demand, in tones which united a profound philosophy with homeliest practical wisdom; enforcing the appeal from first to last by the teachings of the Word of God.

The particulars of Wyclif's first years at Oxford are uncertain. His early biographers say, but apparently without authority, that he was entered as a commoner at Queen's College, then newly founded by Robert Egglesfield, one of the chaplains of Queen Philippa, in honour of whom the College had received its name. The statement derives some likelihood from the fact that the founder was a native of Cumberland, and that the College was specially intended for students from the northern counties. With regard to Wyclif's later residence at Queen's there is little or no question; yet that this was originally his College must at least be regarded as doubtful.[1] His career as a student was distinguished; Knighton, one of his bitterest opponents, acknowledging that "as a doctor in theology Wyclif was the most eminent in those days; in philosophy second to none; and in scholastic learning incomparable. He made it his great aim, with the subtilty of his learning, and by the profundity of his own genius, to surpass the genius of other men—and," Knighton bitterly adds, "to vary from their opinions."

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[1] By some biographers he is said to have been Fellow of Merton College (1356), but it is most probable that another John Wyclif held that position, being afterwards Warden of Canterbury Hall (1365), an office wrongly attributed to the Reformer.

In 1360 or 1361 Wyclif was elected Warden or Master of Balliol College (then called simply Balliol Hall), founded in the preceding century by the Balliols of Barnard Castle, near Wyclif's birthplace. He was now in priest's orders, and was soon afterwards presented to the rectory of Fillingham in Lincolnshire. He resigned the Mastership of the College after a brief tenure; but his home was often at Oxford, where we find him occupying rooms in Queen's College at intervals during many succeeding years; having exchanged Fillingham for Ludgarshall, in Buckinghamshire, to be nearer the University.

His doctor's degree was now taken, and his fame established as a profound and original teacher, while still he was distinguished as a fervent preacher of the Gospel. It was the custom, in the days of the schoolmen, for the admiring disciples of great teachers to apply to each some distinguishing epithet, by which many have become known to after-ages. Thus one was "the Subtle," another "the Irrefragable" Doctor, a third was "the Profound," a fourth "the Angelic," and so on. The Oxford epithet for Wyclif was *Doctor Evangelicus*, "the Evangelical Doctor," in this distinction the greatest of the schoolmen, as he was the last.

The year 1366 was memorable in the history of England. A hundred and fifty years before, John, the most ignoble of her monarchs, had pledged himself to hold the realm in vassalage to the Popedom, in token of which the tribute of a thousand marks yearly was to be paid to Rome. The money had, however, been paid irregularly, according to the disposition of the monarch, the character of the reigning Pope, or the importance of conciliating his favour. Thirty-three years had now passed since the last payment. The war with France had disinclined the English sovereign to recognise the claims of a line of French Popes; and the victors of Cressy and Poitiers would hardly be disposed to transmit their subsidy to Avignon.

But peace had now been concluded; the needs of the Papacy became more pressing, and the ill-advised Pope, Urban V., took occasion to demand the tribute, with the accumulated arrears, from Edward the Third. The question was taken into consideration by the King's Council. Wyclif, who had been nominated one of the royal Chaplains some time previously, was present, and in a tractate afterwards written, he records the discussion in what has been termed "the first existing report of a parliamentary debate," although the sentiments are no doubt coloured by the writer's own mind. Seven barons delivered their opinions. The first appealed to force, pure and simple. "Our ancestors won this realm and held it against all foes by the sword. Let the Pope come and take his tribute by force, if he can; I am ready to stand up and resist him." The second reasoned from the nature of true spiritual lordship. "It has nothing to do with feudal supremacy. Christ refused all secular authority; the foxes had holes, the birds of the air had nests, but He had not where to lay His head. Let us bid the Pope to follow his Master, and stedfastly oppose his claims to civil power." The third appealed to the conditions of such a subsidy, for service done. "The Pope calls himself Servant of the servants of the Most High; but what is his service to this realm? Not spiritual edification, but the absorption of our treasure to enrich himself and his court, while he shows favour and counsel to our enemies." The fourth reasoned from the idea of suzerainty. "The Church estates amount to one-third of this realm; the Pope for these estates is the King's vassal, and ought to do homage to *him*." The fifth argued that "to demand money as the price of John's absolution was flagrant simony; to grant it, therefore, was an irreligious act, especially at the cost of the poor of the realm." The sixth boldly denounced the bargain as infamous. If the kingdom were the Pope's, what right had he to alienate it, and that for not a fifth part of the value? Moreover, Christ alone is Suzerain: the Pope, being fallible, may be in mortal sin. Like the kings of old, let Edward hold the realm immediately of Christ." The last took his stand upon the incompetence of John to surrender the realm. "He could not grant it away in his folly; the whole transaction was null and void."

These opinions are eminently worth recording, as showing the spirit of Englishmen at that era, before a doubt of Romish *doctrines* had entered the popular mind. The barons refused the demand and, joined by the Commons, declared unanimously that "neither King John, nor any other sovereign, had power thus to subject the realm of England, without consent of Parliament; that such consent had not been obtained; and that, passing over other difficulties, the whole transaction on the part of the King was a violation of the oath which he had taken on receiving his crown." The Parliament further resolved, that "should the Pope commence his threatened process against the King of England as his vassal, all possible aid should be rendered, that such usurpation might be effectually resisted."

This bold stand was decisive; and from that time no demand was ever made again by the Pope for tribute from the realm of England.

Wyclif was now emboldened to make a further stand against the Papal claims. A great and growing abuse was the intrusion of the clergy into all high offices of State. The Lord Chancellor, the Lord Treasurer, the Keeper of the Privy Seal, the Chancellor of the Exchequer, the Master of the Rolls, were all Church dignitaries. "One priest was Treasurer for Ireland, and another for the Marshes of Calais ; and while the parson of Oundle is employed as surveyor of the King's buildings, the parson of Harwich is called to the superintendence of the royal wardrobe." Against all this Wyclif uttered an energetic protest. "Neither prelates," he writes, "nor doctors, priests, nor deacons should hold secular offices ; that is, those of Chancery, Treasury, Privy Seal, and other such secular offices in the Exchequer neither be stewards of lands, nor stewards of the hall, nor clerks of the kitchen, nor clerks of accounts ; neither be occupied in any secular office in lords' courts, more especially while secular men are sufficient to do such offices." Parliament took up the question with some effect. William of Wykeham, the celebrated Bishop of Winchester, resigned the Chancellorship, and the ecclesiastical holders of other offices were removed.

This was in 1371. The success of their protest seems to have encouraged the defenders of secular rights to resist the Papacy on other points. The complaint had become general, that foreigners were intruded into English benefices—men who neither resided on their livings nor understood the language of the people. On all these appointments the Papal Court levied large sums ; and in one way or another the treasures of the kingdom were passing to Avignon, to an amount far beyond that of the royal revenue. Attempts, only partly successful, had been made to correct this evil. In 1350 the "Statute of Provisors" had denied the claim of the Pope to dispose of English benefices, and in 1353 the "Statute of Præmunire" had vindicated the right of the State to prohibit the admission or execution of Papal bulls or briefs within the realm. But these laws were to a certain extent inoperative; and complaints were made by the English clergy as well as by the laity, that the interferences and exactions had become more oppressive than ever. A commission was therefore appointed to lay the complaint of the English King, Parliament, and Realm before Pope Gregory XI., and, after some ineffectual preliminaries, proceeded to Bruges in 1374; Gilbert, the Bishop of Bangor, holding the first place, and Wyclif the second. In this city the Ambassadors of Edward the Third, with John of Gaunt, Duke of Lancaster, at their head, were already negotiating peace with France. Many of the highest rank from the two countries had thus assembled; the Papal Court was represented by some of its chief dignitaries. No details of the negotiations have come down to us. The only practical result was in a series of Papal letters addressed to the King of England a year afterwards, yielding some points in regard to the appointment of particular incumbents, but abating no essential claim. Wyclif himself had returned from Bruges after two months' stay, having penetrated more deeply than ever into the secret of the Papacy. He had conferred with its foremost representatives, had studied their arguments and their policy. Far more accurately and certainly than in his quiet life at Oxford, he could estimate the character and pretensions of the power that claimed to hold Christendom in subjection. As the visit of Luther to Rome, nearly a century and a half later, prepared the way for the Reformation, so did Wyclif learn at Bruges that in the Pope were the marks of Antichrist.

Soon after his return, Wyclif was presented by the King to the prebend of Aust, in the collegiate church of Westbury, in the diocese of Worcester, and afterwards to the rectory of Lutterworth, where his last days were spent. With indefatigable activity, he still lectured, preached, and wrote, both in his parish and at Oxford. His teachings became bolder in their protest against prevailing corruptions ; and with his passion for reaching to the roots of things, he strove ever to give his practical conclusions a scientific foundation.

From the time of his receiving his doctor's degree, writes a contemporary opponent, he "began to scatter forth his blasphemies." His celebrated doctrine on "Dominion founded in Grace" was now formulated and maintained. The only source of rightful authority is in God Himself ; and He delegates it to His ministers on earth on condition of obedience to His commandments. Was the Pope then Vicar of the Most High ? Assuredly ; but so also was the temporal sovereign, each in his own sphere. Nay, further, every Christian man still held of God, not indeed "in chief," but with a right of direct appeal to Him, and the right, whether of Christian man or King or Pope, was invalidated by unfaithfulness. Dimly, yet essentially, we have here the great principle of the Reformation ; though as yet Wyclif had not followed his theory to its ultimate consequences.

But the metaphysics of Oxford were taking a very practical shape in the hands of "the Good Parliament" of 1376 ; by which a whole list of Papal exactions was drawn up and presented to the aged and failing King.

Whether Wyclif was a member of this Parliament or not is uncertain ; at any rate, he was marked out as the leading spirit in the great controversy, and at the beginning of 1377 the Convocation of Canterbury summoned Wyclif to appear before them at St. Paul's. The charges made against him are not specified ; we can only judge of them by subsequent accusations. John of Gaunt resolved to accompany the Reformer.

The day was the 19th February 1377, the place the Ladye Chapel of the Cathedral. The Archbishop, Simon Sudbury, was seated in the chair, with Courtenay, Bishop of London, a scion of the noble house of Devon, beside him, and the rest of the bishops on either hand. Many of the English nobility were there also, to witness the examination of the renowned Oxford Doctor. A great crowd surrounded the entrance of the Chapel. Wyclif was escorted by Lancaster, and by Lord Henry Percy, Grand Marshal of England. A small band of armed men followed ; and it is remarkable that there were among the attendants of the Reformer five friars of the mendicant orders, summoned by the Duke, their chief patron, to assist in the defence of Wyclif. As they approached the place of meeting, his friends bid him be of good cheer. "Dread not the bishops," they exclaimed, "for they are all unlearned in comparison with you!"

The Lord Marshal found it a difficult matter to secure an entrance into the Chapel, and when he with his retinue emerged from the eager, pushing crowd, Bishop Courtenay angrily exclaimed : "Lord Percy, if I had known beforehand what masteries you would have kept in the Church, I would have stopped you out from coming hither." John of Gaunt fiercely replied : "He shall keep such masteries here, though you say Nay!"

Wyclif was now standing calmly before his episcopal judges, the angry lords, his attendants, beside him. The Reformer's last and best biographer here takes occasion to sketch his portrait—"a tall thin figure, covered with a long light gown of black colour, with a girdle about his body; the head, adorned with a full, flowing beard, exhibiting features keen and sharply cut; the eye clear and penetrating; the lips firmly closed in token of resolution—the whole man wearing an aspect of lofty earnestness, and replete with dignity and character."

What words he would have spoken we cannot tell, but he was still silent. For now an unseemly brawl broke out in the assembly. Percy turned to Wyclif and bade him be seated. "For," said he, "you have many things to answer to, and you need to repose yourself on a soft seat." The bishop rudely interposed: "It is unmeet that one cited before his ordinary should sit down during his answer. He must and shall stand." Lancaster rejoined: "The Lord Percy's motion for Wyclif is but reasonable. And as for you, my lord bishop, who are grown so proud and arrogant, I will bring down the pride, not of you alone, but of all the prelacy in England." The bishop scornfully retorted: "Do your worst, sir"; while Lancaster, hurried forward by his rage, continued: "Thou trustest in thy parents,[1] who can profit thee nothing; they shall have enough to do to help themselves." By this time the prelate had recovered his self-possession, and rejoined: "My confidence is not in my family, nor in any man else, but only in God, in whom I trust, by whose assistance I will be bold to speak the truth." Lancaster made no reply, but turning away, muttered: "Rather than I will take these words at his hands, I will pluck the bishop by the hair out of the church." The words were overheard by the crowd, and roused them to violent anger, Courtenay being popular with the citizens. The duke and his companions were violently menaced, and the assembly broke up in a riot. All this occurred before nine o'clock in the morning. An attempt in Parliament the same day to humble the municipality of London led to a more serious renewal of the tumult. The mansions of the obnoxious noblemen were attacked; and a priest was killed in the fray.

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[1] The Earl and Countess of Devonshire.

So unexpectedly and unsatisfactorily did this procedure terminate: Wyclif neither heard of what he was accused, nor had the opportunity of declaring himself. He retired peacefully to his work at Lutterworth and Oxford, and awaited the next attack, which was not long in coming—this time from Rome itself.

The year 1377 appeared an auspicious one for the Papacy. The "Seventy Years' Captivity," as the period of residence at Avignon was termed, was now over, and on 17th January Gregory XI. made his solemn entry into Rome. It would seem that the English bishops seized the earliest opportunity of representing to the Pope the tenets, real or supposed, of the man whom they now regarded as their formidable enemy; and the result was the issue on 22nd May following of a series of Papal bulls, in which we find for the first time what were the grounds of accusation against Wyclif, and may thus learn from his enemies how far he had advanced in the path of reformation. The bulls are five in number, three addressed to the prelates, one to the University of Oxford, and one to the King himself. The bishops are directed to ascertain by private inquiry whether certain doctrines, set forth in Nineteen Articles, are really taught by Wyclif; if so, to cause warning of their erroneousness and danger to be conveyed to the highest personages of the realm. Wyclif himself is to be imprisoned pending further instructions from the Pope, or should he escape by flight, to be solemnly cited before the Papal tribunal.

When the bulls reached England, Edward the Third was a dying man. On 21st June he breathed his last. Without royal sanction it was impossible to proceed, and the spirit of the new reign was as yet uncertain. Richard the Second, son of Edward, the Black Prince, was still a boy of twelve, under the guardianship of his widowed mother. The designs of the bold and crafty Duke of Lancaster, the King's uncle, were uncertain, as well as the amount of popular support which any rising on his behalf would command. One of the first questions, however, submitted to Parliament was "whether the kingdom of England is not competent to restrain the treasure of the land from being carried off to foreign parts; although the Pope should demand it under the threat of Church censures." To this question, by command of the young King and his Council, Wyclif drew up a detailed, argumentative answer—a very marvel among State papers! That such treasure may be lawfully retained for the uses of the kingdom is argued from the principles of natural reason, from the teachings of Scripture, and from the law of conscience; the conclusion being sustained by reference to the evils that would follow another course. With regard to the mischief that might ensue from resistance to the Papal demands, and especially to the possibility that the Pope might lay the realm under an interdict, Wyclif reasons, not without a touch of sarcasm, that "the Holy Father would not thus treat his children, especially considering the piety of England"; but if he should, "it is one comfort that such censures carry no divine authority, and another, that God does not desert those who trust in Him, and who, keeping His law, fear God rather than men."

But Parliament was prorogued without decisive action being taken, and in December the Pope's mandate was presented to the University of Oxford, with a schedule of the nineteen dangerous opinions. The University demanded time for consideration; to the honour of Oxford, its authorities were unwilling to surrender their foremost teacher even to the Pope, and no action followed.

The prelates were more compliant; and early in 1378 a Synod was convened in the Archbishop's chapel at Lambeth, before which Wyclif was summoned to answer for himself in the presence of the Papal delegates. He produced a long apologetic document, moderately written, subtle and scholastic in its reasonings. He vindicates his true meaning in the passages inculpated, which had been often strangely perverted, and sets forth his views in a manner which is interesting to us as showing the extreme point to which, as a Reformer, he had as yet attained. The Nineteen Articles, from beginning to end, deal with such topics as ecclesiastical dominion and property, the right of "binding and loosing" as inherent in the Church, the nature and limits of excommunication. "It is not possible," says Wyclif, "for any man to be excommunicated unless he be excommunicated first and principally by himself." "It is not Church censure," says the bold Reformer, "but sin that hurts a man." "Neither the Pope nor any other Christian can *absolutely* bind or loose, but only as he obeys the law of Christ." "It seems to me that he who usurps to himself this power must be the Man of Sin!" These were bold words. Nor was the final proposition of the nineteen the least unpalatable, that "an ecclesiastic or churchman, even the Pope of

Rome, may lawfully be corrected for the benefit of the Church, and be accused by the clergy as well as by the laity." For, says Wyclif, "the Church is above the Pontiff." "If the whole College of Cardinals is remiss in correcting him for the necessary welfare of the Church, it is evident that the rest of the body, which may chance to be chiefly made up of the laity, may medicinally reprove him, and induce him to live a better life."

The Duke of Lancaster and the Lord Percy were no longer at hand to befriend Wyclif. But their place was better supplied by a throng of eager citizens, who now supported him for his doctrine's sake, as they had formerly opposed him because of his associates. They cried out menacingly: "The Pope's briefs shall have no effect in England without the King's consent." "Every man is master in his own house!" A tumult was threatened, when Sir Lewis Clifford, an officer in the Court of the Queen-mother, entering the chapel, demanded, in the name of his mistress, that the Synod should pronounce no final judgment in the case. The Archbishop was fain to content himself with commanding Wyclif to cease from preaching or teaching the obnoxious doctrines. On the Reformer himself none dared to lay hands, and he calmly retired. A contemporary chronicler, an enemy of Wyclif, scornfully writes of the prelates assembled that "their speech became soft as oil, and with such fear were they struck, that they seemed to be as a man that heareth not, and in whose mouth are no reproofs."

About the time of the stormy Lambeth Synod, a yet more tumultuous conclave was assembling in Rome. Gregory XI. was dead, and after much angry debate among the cardinals, a Pope was chosen who, though an Italian, was not a Roman. As Urban VI. he assumed the Chair, and all seemed to promise well. But his stern ascetic rule soon disgusted many. The cardinals with one exception deserted him and elected Clement VII., who established his court at Avignon. Pope and antipope thus presented themselves before astonished Christendom, and the great schism lasted for half a century. "Now," said Wyclif, "is the head of Antichrist cloven in twain, and one part contendeth against the other!"

The event was on the whole favourable to the Reformer. Urban was too much occupied in the great dispute with his rival to have attention to spare for the distant English controversy. Again, therefore, Wyclif was unmolested; and the three years that followed mark a most important advance in his convictions and his work.

His attacks upon the friars mainly belong to this period of his life, although no doubt he had already taken frequent occasion to expose the rapacity, the hypocrisy, and the spiritual pride too often found in connection with the "voluntary humility" of the Orders. These evils had already been often denounced, notably by Grossetête, Bishop of Lincoln, and Fitzralph, Archbishop of Armagh. How the friars were regarded by the community at large may be seen in Chaucer's satirical picture of "The Pardoner." With a roving commission to preach, to celebrate mass, to receive confessions, and to grant absolution, the Dominicans, or Black Friars, and the Franciscans, or Grey Friars, with the smaller orders of Carmelites (White Friars) and Augustinians (Austin Friars), traversed the country as mendicants. The gifts bestowed on them were profuse, as the parade of asceticism is often taken as a mark of sanctity; and the convents of the "poor" orders were correspondingly enriched. Their encroachments irritated the regular clergy, whom they threatened to supersede. The Universities themselves were alarmed. The friars became lecturers in theology; and so alluring were their representations, that young men were induced to abandon other pursuits and to take the vows. Parents refused to send their sons to Oxford or Cambridge, lest they should be thus seduced; and the number of students in the former University was diminished, it is said, by thousands! University statutes were passed to meet the evil. But Wyclif took up the subject on other than academical grounds. His words were but a part of his long protest against the usurpation of spiritual authority: "I say this for certain, though thou have priests and friars to sing for thee, and though thou, each day, hear many masses, and found churches and colleges, and go on pilgrimages all thy life, and give all thy goods to pardoners, this will not bring thy soul to heaven. While, if the commandments of God are revered to the end, though neither penny nor half-penny be possessed, there will be everlasting pardon and heavenly bliss."

There is a story that during this period of his residence in Oxford, Wyclif was confined to his bed by illness, the result of his incessant labours and trials. For awhile his life seemed in imminent danger, and the Mendicant Friars hearing of it sent to him a deputation, to adjure him to repentance. Four doctors from their different bodies, with four aldermen of Oxford, entered what they supposed to be the dying-chamber. After some words of sympathy, they entered on the main object of their visit. Wyclif still remained silent. They spoke to him of the wrongs inflicted, as they said, by his tongue and pen upon the brotherhood, and they put it to him whether, as he now seemed near his end, he would not confess his errors, revoke his charges against these pious fraternities, and seek reconciliation with them. Wyclif heard them patiently to the close, then beckoned to his servant to raise him in bed. This done, he fixed his eyes on his visitors, and said, with a loud voice: "I shall not die, but live, and declare the evil deeds of the friars." The doctors and aldermen departed in confusion, and Wyclif recovered.

Still further to counteract the evil influences of these brotherhoods, and to provide for the dissemination of the Gospel, Wyclif organised a company of "poor preachers," graduates of Oxford, trained under his influence, to traverse the land, preaching the Gospel. This was their simple commission. They had no pardons to dispense, no spiritual authority to assert; but went forth from town to town, and village to village, clad in long russet gown, barefooted, staff in hand, to tell of Christ, and to call sinners to repentance. They were afterwards suppressed, being confounded with the adversaries of law and order in the great peasant revolt, but their work was self-denying and noble. They were the "Methodists of the fourteenth century."

Of Wyclif's Translation of the Bible, which engrossed at this time many studious hours at Oxford, we must speak separately. He devoted himself at the same time to the preparation of the great works on Divinity, which no doubt contain the substance of his University teaching through many years, especially the series of treatises called *Summa Theologiæ*, and the *Trialogus*, so called because it consists of a series of conversations between three speakers, Truth, Falsehood, and Wisdom. This latter work is remarkable as containing the conclusions to which Wyclif had at length been led on the subject of Transubstantiation. His rejection of the Roman doctrine had now become distinct and unhesitating. The doctors of the University took alarm, and issued a solemn declaration, the preamble of which fairly enough recites Wyclif's main conclusions :

" 1. That in the Sacrament of the altar the substance of material bread and wine do remain the same after consecration that they were before.

" 2. That in that venerable Sacrament, the body and blood of Christ are not *essentially* nor *substantially*, nor even *bodily*, but *figuratively* or *tropically*, so that Christ is not there truly or verily in His own proper Person."

It was thereupon solemnly enacted, " that no one for the future, of any degree, state, or condition, do publicly maintain, teach, or defend the two aforesaid erroneous assertions, or either of them, in the schools, or out of them, in this University, on pain of imprisonment and suspension from all scholastic exercises, and also on pain of the greater excommunication."

The Chancellor of the University, with his assessors, immediately proceeded with this decree to the schools where Wyclif was lecturing, and, interrupting him, read it aloud before the assembled students. All were taken by surprise : for the moment Wyclif himself appeared bewildered ; but recovering himself, he quietly replied that neither Chancellor nor doctors could refute his opinion. Then, rising from his professor's chair, which he was never to resume, he solemnly appealed from this condemnation to the King in Council.

This same year of 1381 witnessed great and portentous events, which were not to be without their influence on Wyclif's remaining days. John Ball, falsely[1] averred to have been one of Wyclif's " poor priests," had been preaching communistic doctrines, which threatened to destroy the very framework of society: "When Adam delved, and Eve span, who was then the gentleman?" The incident in the tyler's cottage at Dartford but furnished the spark for the explosion. The popular rising that followed, and its swift and sanguinary suppression, are matters of ordinary history. While the insurgents held the Tower, they had murdered Archbishop Sudbury; and Courtenay, Bishop of London, succeeded him in the primacy. Some delay necessarily occurred before his investiture, but no sooner was this accomplished than the Archbishop instituted proceedings against Wyclif.

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[1] He had been preaching for twenty years, long before the time of the " poor priests."

Meantime, in the early part of 1382, the Reformer had presented his appeal from the Oxford Chancellor to the King in Council and to the Parliament. But nothing decisive was accomplished. The Duke of Lancaster now looked coldly upon Wyclif. As long as the question had been one of revenue and power, John of Gaunt had been for reform. But theological subtleties lay quite beyond the statesman's range of thought. To insist on them was to introduce a disturbing force into society, the issue of which who could see? Accordingly, Lancaster went down to Oxford and enjoined Wyclif to be silent. What could be more easy, more politic than to obey? Men of action cannot estimate the force of an overmastering idea; men of the world know nothing of the imperial power of a religious conviction. Wyclif persisted; he strove to maintain his doctrine in the terms of a scholastic philosophy. To our mind he refines overmuch, and perplexes himself with his own subtleties; but on the main point he was clear; expressively adding that the third part of the clergy are on his side, and would defend their views at the peril of their lives.

Courtenay was installed at Canterbury on 6th May 1382. On the 17th of that month he convened an assembly of bishops and divines at the Dominican monastery in Blackfriars, to consider Wyclif's views. Ten bishops, sixteen doctors of law, thirty doctors of theology, and four bachelors of law attended the sittings. Wyclif himself was not present, perhaps he had not been summoned. During the conference on 21st May an earthquake, mentioned in contemporary chronicles and poems, shook the city, and filled the assembly with consternation. Some regarded it as an adverse omen; but the Archbishop was equal to the occasion, and declared the earthquake to be an emblem of purification from false doctrine. Wyclif, on the other hand, regarded the portent as a sign of God's judgment against error, and was in the habit of describing the assembly as "the Earthquake Council."

Ten articles were pronounced by this Council heretical and fourteen erroneous. They range over the main points of Wyclif's teaching, with more or less of misrepresentation. The first three of the "heresies" concern the Lord's Supper, and amount to a restatement of what had already been condemned. The conclusions of the Council were promulgated with extraordinary solemnity; a procession of clergy and laity passing through London barefoot to St. Paul's, where the Carmelite monk, John Cunningham, preached a sermon against the inculpated doctrines, followed by the reading of the Twenty-four Articles and the utterance of a solemn condemnation against all who should hereafter teach or receive these doctrines.

The Archbishop promptly followed up these measures by proceedings at Oxford, as the headquarters of the heresy. Wyclif was inhibited from all academic functions, and expelled from the city and University. He remained unmoved, well content to remain in his beloved Lutterworth, and to perfect his Translation of the Bible. Public opinion was still so strongly on his side, that no more stringent measures were possible. A Romanist chronicler of the period writes: "A man could not meet two people on the road, but one of them was a disciple of Wyclif's."

The amazing literary activity of the Reformer during the last two years of his life can only be explained by the fact that much material had been prepared by him year by year, which now only for the first time saw the light. His writings cannot, indeed, be very accurately dated; but Dr. Buddensieg, in his edition of Wyclif's Latin Tracts, assigns most of them, especially of his most trenchant assaults on the friars, to this part of his life. Tracts and Sermons, Latin and English, metaphysical and popular, issued without intermission from his pen; while his great work, the Translation of the Bible, engrossed all his powers.

When this work was begun, we have no means of knowing; and his other writings contain few or no allusions to the progress of the task. We only know that it was finished in the latter years of his life, after he was silenced at Oxford. The New Testament was completed first, and is entirely Wyclif's. His friend, Nicholas Hereford, an old associate at Oxford, and honoured in sharing his expulsion, was his zealous coadjutor, translating the first part of the Old Testament; and John Purvey, Wyclif's curate at Lutterworth, rendered valuable service, re-editing and revising the whole. When the work was finished, many transcribers took in hand the task of multiplying copies; the elaboration and costliness of not a few proving the demand which existed for the work among the opulent as well as the humbler classes. Mr. Forshall and Sir F. Madden, the editors of the noble edition of 1850, were able to consult nearly 150 manuscript copies, most of which were written within forty years of Wyclif's death.

"Christ delivered His Gospel," writes Wyclif's antagonist, Knighton, "to the clergy and doctors of the Church, that they might administer to the laity and to weaker persons, according to the state of the times and the wants of men. But this Master John Wyclif translated it out of Latin into the tongue Anglican—not Angelic! Thus it became of itself vulgar, more open to the laity, and to women, who could read, than it usually is to the clergy, even the most learned and intelligent. In this way the Gospel-pearl is cast abroad and trodden underfoot of swine; and that which was before precious both to clergy and to laity is rendered, as it were, the common jest of both."

How Wyclif performed his noble task has been abundantly told in many a treatise on that theme of inexhaustible interest, the English Bible. If there were drawbacks in the execution of the work, it should be remembered that he was the pioneer, and again that, being ignorant of Hebrew and Greek, he could translate only from the Latin Vulgate. But, indeed, he scarcely needs such apology. For accuracy, perspicuity, and terseness, as well as for frequent and exquisite felicities of expression mingling with his quaintest phraseology, the version may to this day be studied with delight. To all who would trace the history of the English tongue it is essential. Professor Montague Burrows does not speak too strongly when he says: "To Wyclif we owe, more than to any one person who can be mentioned, our English language, our English Bible, and our Reformed religion. How easily the words slip from the tongue! But is not this almost the very atmosphere we breathe?"

It is instructive to note that in a Synod of 1408, headed by Archbishop Arundel—whence the name "The Arundel Constitutions"—the following resolution was adopted :—

"We enact and ordain that no one henceforth do by his own authority translate any text of Holy Scripture into the English tongue or into any other, by way of book or treatise; nor let any book or treatise now lately composed in the time of John Wyclif, or since, or hereafter to be composed, be read in whole or in part, in public or private, under pain of the greater excommunication."

Still from generation to generation copies of the proscribed volume were handed down as heirlooms in many an English home, often stealthily circulated from hand to hand; until they were superseded by the invention of printing, and the labours of Tindale and Coverdale.

The spirit of persecution seemed to have exhausted itself in Wyclif's case in his expulsion from Oxford, and in the rancorous words of his enemies that followed him to the close. He dwelt unmolested in the peaceful seclusion of Lutterworth, possessing the martyr's spirit without the martyr's fate. Not yet did the enactment "for the burning of heretics" disgrace the English statute-book, and Wyclif's friends were still too powerful to allow of his being imprisoned. Meantime, he saw the progress of his doctrines. The Lollards, as his followers were called—mostly humble folk, who had been won to Christ through Wyclif's "poor priests," and the reading or hearing of his pungent, practical tracts—multiplied on every hand. The hour of deliverance from Papal domination, and of the triumphs of a pure Gospel, seemed near. But the persecutions of the fifteenth century, the wars between the Houses of York and Lancaster, and perhaps the reaction that followed the Peasants' Revolt, appeared for a time to blight the fair promise. Yet Lollardy, though crushed, retained the principle of life. Men and women appear, from time to time, all through those dreary years, bravely confessing the truth, and patiently suffering in its defence. Many more, unknown to fame, cherished the treasure which Wyclif and his coadjutors had given them, and learned from the English Bible the lessons of a pure Christianity. Silently, but effectually, the soil was thus prepared, in which, when the time came—nearly a century and a half afterwards—the doctrines of the Reformation struck deep root and sprang to vigorous life.

In yet another direction the influence of Wyclif remained. The Queen Consort, Anne of Bohemia, who had come to England in 1382, was an eager reader of his works, and especially of the Four Gospels in English. Through her influence, and that of persons connected with her Court, his doctrines found footing in Eastern Europe. John Huss and Jerome of Prague (who had studied in the University of Oxford) accepted them with eagerness, and the testimony which they sealed with their blood was the intrepid utterance of the truths that they had largely learned from Wyclif. The works of the English Reformer were widely circulated in Bohemia; many were burned; many others fell by the fortune of war into Austrian hands, and are now in the Imperial Library at Vienna. Even on the Continent, therefore, the way to Reformation was in great measure prepared by the teachings of Oxford and Lutterworth. Of that Reformation Wyclif was, in the phrase of John Foxe, the "Morning Star."

The Reformer's work on earth was done. In 1382 he had an attack of paralysis, which incapacitated him to some degree from public labours; on 28th December 1384, while hearing mass in the Church at Lutterworth, he was stricken down a second time, and remained speechless until his death, three days afterwards, on New Year's Eve.

His remains were laid in the churchyard in the midst of his beloved people ; but not there to rest. In the year 1415, the Council of Constance having selected from his writings a series of propositions which they condemned as heretical, commanded that "his body and bones, if they could be distinguished from those of the faithful, should be disinterred and cast away from the consecrated ground." This inhuman and absurd decree was disregarded for some thirteen years, when, at the peremptory mandate of the Pope, it was executed under the direction of the Bishop of Lincoln. The bones were not only disinterred but burned, and cast into the little river Swift, a rapid stream which runs at the foot of the hill on which Lutterworth is built, and, after a course of some miles, falls into the Avon. "Thus," says Thomas Fuller, in his *Church History of Great Britain*, "this brook did convey his ashes into Avon, Avon into Severn, Severn into the narrow sea, and this into the wide ocean. And so the ashes of Wyclif are the emblem of his doctrine, which is now dispersed all the world over." The thought is beautifully expanded by Wordsworth :

Wycliffe is disinhumed :
Yea, his dry bones to ashes are consumed
And flung into the brook that travels near ;
Forthwith that ancient Voice which streams can hear
Thus speaks (that Voice which walks upon the wind,
Though seldom heard by busy human kind)—
"As thou these ashes, little brook, wilt bear
Into the Avon—Avon to the tide
Of Severn—Severn to the narrow seas—
Into main ocean they,—this deed accurst
An emblem yields to friends and enemies
How the bold teacher's doctrine, sanctified
By truth, shall spread, throughout the world dispersed."

WILLIAM TINDALE.

WILLIAM TINDALE

(1484–1536)

By
Richard Lovett, M.A.

"THE true servant and martyr of God, who, for his notable pains and travail, may well be called the Apostle of England,"—these are the words that Foxe places at the head of his sketch of the life of Tindale, and no truer description of the man can be given. For, bold as the statement may seem to those who have not carefully studied the wonderful story of his life and work, England to-day owes more to no man whose name stands on her roll of fame than to Tindale. To be honoured and reverenced, the man's character and work need only to be known.

Of Tindale's youth and early manhood very little is known. Foxe says he "was born about the borders of Wales, and brought up from a child in the University of Oxford, where he, by long continuance, grew up and increased as well in the knowledge of tongues and other liberal arts, as especially in the knowledge of the Scriptures, *whereunto his mind was singularly addicted*, insomuch that he, lying then in Magdalen Hall, read privily to certain students and fellows of Magdalen College some parcel of divinity; instructing them in the knowledge and truth of the Scriptures. His manners also and conversation being correspondent to the same, were such that all they that knew him, reputed and esteemed him to be a man of most virtuous disposition and of life unspotted."

Later research has added little to Foxe. It seems to be established that Tindale was born about 1484, most probably in Gloucestershire, possibly at the village of Slymbridge. It is certain that he was not born at the place fixed on by tradition—the village of North Nibley; and equally certain that he began life in some part of the beautiful landscape over which ranges the eye of the traveller who stands beside the monument erected in Tindale's honour on Nibley Knoll.

Tindale entered Oxford about 1508 or 1509, and recent researches have discovered that he was admitted to the degree of Bachelor of Arts 4th July 1512, and that he was created Master of Arts 2nd July 1515.

From Oxford Tindale passed to Cambridge, where "he was further ripened in the Word of God." Why he went is not known. It may be that he found it prudent to go because the authorities had heard of his habit of "instructing in the knowledge and truth of the Scriptures." Perhaps the fame of Erasmus, who was at that time teaching the supremacy of Scripture and pouring ridicule upon the traditional theology of the day, drew him thither. A group of remarkable men were then in residence at Cambridge: Cranmer, Latimer, Stephen Gardiner, and Bilney, who was first to deny and then to die for the truth. Here he doubtless diligently pursued the study of Greek, and quietly but most efficiently fitted himself for what, all unknown to him then, was to be the great work of his life.

How long Tindale lived at Cambridge is not certainly known, nor why he finally left it, but "he resorted," most probably about 1521, "to one Master Welch, a knight of Gloucestershire, and was there schoolmaster to his children, and in good favour with his master."

"Master Welch" lived at the manor-house of Little Sodbury, in Gloucestershire, which still stands, and has the honour of being the only place to which the traveller can go with the certainty of seeing the rooms in which Tindale once lived and talked. It was in this house also that he finally decided to translate the Scriptures into English.

In all probability he acted, after the fashion of those days, rather as a chaplain to the household than as tutor to "Master Welch's," or, to give him his full title, Sir John Walsh's children. The residence at Little Sodbury proved the turning-point in Tindale's life. Again we quote Foxe: As Sir John Walsh "kept a good ordinary commonly at his table, there resorted unto him many times sundry abbots, deans, archdeacons, with divers other doctors, and great beneficed men; who there, together with Master Tindale sitting at the same table, did use many times to enter communication, and talk of learned men, as of Luther and of Erasmus; also of divers other controversies and questions upon the Scripture. Then Master Tindale, as he was learned and well practised in God's matters, so he spared not to show unto them simply and plainly his judgment in matters, as he thought; and when they at any time did vary from Tindale in opinions and judgment, he would show them in the book, and lay plainly before them the open and manifest places of the Scriptures, to confute their errors, and confirm his sayings. And thus continued they for a certain season, reasoning and contending together divers and sundry times, till at length they waxed weary, and bare a secret grudge in their hearts against him."

It was at this time that Tindale began his work as a translator, and thinking that he might convince some by the authority of Erasmus who refused to be persuaded by his own arguments and by Scripture, he rendered into English a book written in Latin by Erasmus, called *The Manual of a Christian Soldier*. This was a famous book at that time, and had been translated into many European languages. It was a bold, outspoken protest against the whole method of theological study of that age, and against the wicked lives of so many of the monks and friars.

This translation was never printed, but Tindale lent it to others to read, and especially to Sir John Walsh and his wife; and "after they had read and well perused the same, the doctorly prelates were no more so often called to the house, neither had they the cheer and countenance when they came as before they had; which thing they marking, and well perceiving, and supposing no less but it came by the means of Master Tindale, refrained themselves, and at last utterly withdrew, and came no more there."

Having won over Sir John Walsh and his wife, and thus established himself firmly at Little Sodbury, Tindale began preaching in the surrounding villages, and on the College Green in Bristol. This practice at once aroused the hostility of the ignorant and violent priests, who "raged and railed" against him in the alehouses, and misrepresented his teaching. The bishop of the diocese, after the fashion of that day, was an Italian prelate, living in Italy; and Wolsey, who farmed the revenues, was also non-resident, so that Tindale might have been left in peace, had not the chancellor who administered local matters happened to possess a keen scent for heresy. At a special sitting all the priests of the neighbourhood were summoned to appear, Tindale being of course included. He went, and has himself told what took place. "When I came before the chancellor, he threatened me grievously, and reviled me, and rated me as though I had been a dog; and laid to my charge whereof there could be none accuser brought forth." He seems to have successfully refuted the charges, and to have escaped without any penalty. But he began to see that ignorance and superstition and wickedness die hard. The men with whom he reasoned were more likely to turn and rend him than to prize the pearls of truth he cast before them. He unburdened his soul to a friend in the neighbourhood, a man who had held the post of chancellor to a bishop, who put into language what Tindale had long been thinking. "Do you not know," he said, "that the Pope is very antichrist, whom the Scripture speaketh of? But beware what you say; for if you shall be perceived to be of that opinion, it will cost you your life."

A train of thought like this having once been started, Tindale was not the man either to miss the evidences of its soundness or to shrink from its logical issue. Scripture had taught him, and could teach others. He had begun to know the truth, and the truth was setting him free from the spiritual tyranny of Rome and from any fear of man. In his *Preface to the Five Books of Moses*, written long years afterwards, Tindale has traced for us his mental experience at this time. Speaking of the desire felt by the papists to suppress the Scriptures, he states: "A thousand books had they lever (rather) to be put forth against their abominable doings and doctrines than that the Scripture should come to light . . . which thing only moved me to translate the New Testament. Because *I had perceived by experience*, how that it was impossible to establish the lay-people in any truth, except the

Scriptures were plainly laid before their eyes in their mother-tongue, that they might see the process, order, and meaning of the text; for else, whatsoever truth is taught them these enemies of all truth quench it again."

Hence, not long after his visit to his friend, in a discussion with a divine, "recounted for a learned man," Tindale drove him to this rash assertion: "We were better without God's laws than the Pope's." To this Tindale rejoined, "I defy the Pope and all his laws; *if God spare my life, ere many years I will cause a boy that driveth the plough shall know more of the Scripture than thou doest.*" These words set forth the toil to which henceforth he was to devote himself, in the accomplishment of which he was to be "in journeyings often, in perils of waters, in perils by his own countrymen, in perils in the city, in perils among false brethren," and for which he was at last to lay down his life.

As Tindale's purpose became known, his opponents grew more and more bitter against him, and at length he resolved to go to London and there see what help he could get for his great undertaking. He reached London in July or August 1523. The first flush of Henry VIII.'s successes was over and troubles were beginning. Wars and pleasures had emptied the treasury, and Wolsey, who had little love for parliaments, was compelled to summon a parliament and then to submit to a tardy and partial grant of his demands for money. Into the midst of the angry discussions, the rival sections, the pomp, the pleasure, the wickedness of the capital, Tindale came. He looked out upon all things with the clear, unclouded vision of a pure soul, and he saw much in the actions and words of men which, when tested by Scripture, became utterly corrupt. We cannot do better than tell in his own words how he fared.

Tunstal, Bishop of London, had a reputation for learning and liberality to scholars, and had been praised by Erasmus. "Then thought I," writes Tindale, "if I might come to this man's service, I were happy. . . . But God (which knoweth what is within hypocrites) saw that I was beguiled, and that that counsel was not the next way to my purpose. And therefore he gat me no favour in my lord's sight; whereupon my lord answered me, his house was full, and advised me to seek in London, where he said I could not lack a service. And so in London I abode almost a year, and marked the course of the world, and heard our praters (I would say preachers) how they boasted themselves and their high authority; and beheld the pomps of our prelates, and how busy they were, as they yet are, to set peace and unity in the world; and saw things whereof I defer to speak at this time; and understood at the last not only that there was no room in my lord of London's palace to translate the New Testament, but also that there was no place to do it in all England, as experience doth now openly declare."

In May 1524 Tindale went to Hamburg, and then, in all probability, visited Wittenberg, and during a stay of some months completed there his translation of the New Testament. He doubtless saw much of Luther and was greatly influenced by his writings, but modern research has demonstrated that Tindale was no mere translator of Luther's German version. He was, for his age, a skilled Greek scholar, and he translated from the 1522 edition of Erasmus' Greek Testament, using at the same time the Latin translation of Erasmus, the Vulgate, and Luther's New Testament. For reasons that can only now be guessed at, when the work was nearly finished he went to Cologne, a town then famous for its printers, to get the book in type.

At first all went well. A man named Quentel undertook the work, an edition of 3000 was decided upon, and day by day Tindale saw the end of his long labour of love drawing near. But he was once again to feel the bitterness of hope deferred, and once again to find how powerful to hinder good work one misguided man may be. At the very time when the New Testament was taking on its English dress, Quentel was also printing a book for one of the most watchful and rancorous enemies of the Reformation, John Cochlæus. This man, in a book written years afterwards, tells us that he learnt that in Cologne "were two Englishmen lurking, learned, skilful in languages, eloquent, whom, however, he never could see or converse with. Inviting, therefore, some printers to his lodging, after they were excited with wine, one of them in private conversation disclosed to him the secret by which England was to be drawn over to the party of Luther, viz. that there were at that very time in the press 3000 copies of the Lutheran New Testament, translated into the English language, and that they had advanced as far as the letter K in the order of the sheets."

This information, correct in all points except that the work being printed was *not* a translation of the "Lutheran New Testament," at once enraged Cochlæus and aroused him to instant action. An order prohibiting the printing was obtained from the Senate of Cologne; but Tindale and Roye, warned of their danger, collected the sheets already printed and sailed up the Rhine to Worms. Cochlæus sent tidings of his discovery to Henry VIII., Cardinal Wolsey, and to the Bishop of Rochester, in order that the English ports might be strictly watched.

Nothing daunted, Tindale was no sooner safe in Worms than he began to urge on his great undertaking. The size and style of the book were altered, and 3000 copies of an *octavo* edition were printed, and probably very soon afterwards the original *quarto* edition was completed, making in all 6000 precious volumes. There are many interesting details connected with these two editions which we have no space here to consider, and which belong more to the bibliographer than to the general reader. The problems are rendered more difficult of solution from the fact that of the 3000 *quarto* copies only one mutilated fragment (now in the British Museum) has come down to us, and of the 3000 *octavo* copies only two are now known to exist—one, wanting only the title-page, in the Library of the Baptist College, Bristol; and the other, lacking many leaves, in the Library of St. Paul's Cathedral.

This wonderful book probably reached England about the middle of 1526. During the summer of that year a copy fell into the hands of one of the bishops. A conclave was summoned; Tunstal, the Bishop of London, denounced it, and it was resolved that the book should be burnt wherever found. But there were not a few who held "that the book was not only faultless but very well translated, and was devised to be burnt because men should not be able to prove such faults as were at Paul's Cross declared to have been found in it were never found there indeed but untruly surmised."

Commenting in after years upon the criticisms passed on his work, Tindale said, "There is not so much as one *i* therein if it lack a tittle over his head, but they have noted it, and number it unto the ignorant people for an heresy." On 24th October 1526 Tunstal proclaimed that all in his diocese possessing the book who did not at once deliver their copies to his Vicar-General would be excommunicated, and a similar proclamation was issued on 3rd November by the Archbishop of Canterbury. All the authority of the Church was exerted to arrest the circulation, to punish those who sold and those who bought it, and to destroy the volume which by a kind of instinct the prelates of Henry VIII.'s day felt would be ruinous to their influence and a constant rebuke to their pomp and pride.

Since 1526 Tindale's English New Testament has been one of the mightiest influences upon English life and thought. The comparison of a passage taken at random from the Grenville Fragment and compared with the Authorised and Revised versions, will help the reader to appreciate not only how greatly Tindale influenced all subsequent translations, but how much of our New Testament still stands as he left it in 1525. Take Matthew xviii. 19-27, which is here printed *exactly* as it stands in the Grenville Fragment, except that the spelling and type are modern. The words in italics remain in *both* the Authorised and the Revised versions :

Again I say unto you that if two of you shall agree in *earth* in *any* manner *thing* whatsoever *they shall* desire, *it shall be* given *them of my father which is in heaven. For where two or three are gathered together in my name there am I in the midst of them.*

Then came Peter to him, and said, Master, *how oft shall my brother* trespass *against me and I* shall *forgive him?* shall I forgive him *seven times? Jesus* said *unto him, I say not unto thee seven times but seventy times seven* times. *Therefore is the Kingdom of Heaven likened unto a certain King which would* take account *of his servants. And when he had begun to reckon one was brought unto him which owed him ten thousand talents:*

but when *he had* nought *to pay* the *lord commanded him to be sold and his wife and his children and all that he had and payment to be made. The servant fell down and* besought *him saying*, Sir, give *me* respite *and I will pay* it every whit. Then had *the lord* pity on the *servant* and loosed *him and forgave him the debt.*

Thus much more than half of our New Testament, even in its latest form, stands as it came first from Tindale's pen. And what is even more important, the style, the simplicity, the character and spirit of the translation are what he made them in his singleness of purpose, in his devotion to his labour, and in his dependence upon God. He who can measure what the New Testament has been to England can measure what the nation owes first to Tindale and in a less degree to those who carried on and completed his work.

In the margin stand brief notes and comments, the "pestilent glosses" which Tunstal and his colleagues were never weary of denouncing, which exhibit a keen insight into the very heart of Scripture and throw a vivid light upon many a passage. For instance, against the verse, "Whatsoever ye bind on earth shall be bound in heaven," Tindale notes, "Here *all* bind and loose," a statement cutting at the root of all the high sacerdotal claims of the Pope. Against the words "If thine eye be single all thy body is full of light," he writes, "The eye is single when a man in all his deeds looketh but on the will of God, and looketh not for land, honour, or any other reward in this world ; neither ascribeth heaven or a higher room in the heaven unto his deeds : but accepteth heaven as a thing purchased by the blood of Christ and worketh freely for love's sake only."

But in some respects the most touching and most suggestive part of this fragment is the prologue prefixed to it. Through this we can look into Tindale's very heart. It is through writings like this that we, in the enjoyment of our manifold religious blessings and privileges, can see what manner of men they were who died in the dark ages of the past to win them. Here is one extract:

"When we hear the law truly preached, how that we ought to love and honour God with all our strength and might, from the low bottom of the heart; and our neighbour (yea, our enemies) as ourselves, inwardly, from the ground of the heart, and to do whatsoever God biddeth, and abstain from whatsoever God forbiddeth with all love and meekness, with a fervent and a burning lust from the centre of the heart, then beginneth the conscience to rage against the law and against God. No sea (be it never so great a tempest) is so unquiet. It is not possible for a natural man to consent to the law that it should be good or that God should be righteous which maketh the law; man's wit, reason, and will are so fast glued, yea, nailed and chained unto the will of the devil. Neither can any creature loose the bonds save the blood of Christ."

From the time of its first issue until his imprisonment Tindale constantly laboured to improve his version of the New Testament and also to translate the Old. The best proof of this is a comparison of the editions of 1525 and 1534. It is hardly too much to say that he succeeded as if inspired from above for this special work, and he toiled at it with a persistence that sprang from intense love for the work, the keenest sense of its supreme importance, and a self-sacrifice culminating in martyrdom nobly met. Bishop Westcott, than whom no scholar was better fitted to pass judgment, said of Tindale, in his capacity as a translator:

"In rendering the sacred text, he remained throughout faithful to the instincts of a scholar. From first to last his style and his interpretation are his own, and in the originality of Tindale is included in a large measure the originality of our English Version. . . . It is of even less moment that by far the greater part of his translation remains intact in our present Bibles, than that his spirit animates the whole. He toiled faithfully himself, and where he failed he left to those who should come after the secret of success. . . . His influence decided that our Bible should be popular, and not literary, speaking in a simple dialect, and that so by its simplicity it should be endowed with permanence."

During 1527 and 1528 Tindale seems to have lived in quiet retirement at Marburg. Roye, who had helped him in seeing the New Testament through the press, had published a coarse satire on Wolsey, which for some time was thought to have been written by Tindale. The Cardinal used his great influence to get Tindale into his power, but without avail. In his quiet retreat Tindale heard with indignation of the burning of the Testament, but in no way ceased his toil in the cause of the Gospel.

The Parable of the Wicked Mammon, the first of Tindale's books, was printed at Marburg in 1528. It purports to be a comment on the parable of the unjust steward ; it really is a powerful setting forth of the doctrine of justification by faith, and a careful examination of those passages of Scripture considered to tell against and for that doctrine. It abounds in passages like the following :

" See therefore thou have God's promises in thine heart, and that thou believe them without wavering ; and when temptation ariseth, and the devil layeth the law and thy deeds against thee, answer him with the promises, and turn to God, and confess thyself to Him. Remember that He is the God of mercy and of truth, and cannot but fulfil His promises. Also remember that His Son's blood is stronger than all the sins and wickedness of the whole world ; and therewith quiet thyself, and thereunto commit thyself, and bless thyself in all temptation (namely, at the hour of death) with that holy candle. Or else perishest thou, though thou hast a thousand holy candles about thee, a hundred ton of holy water, a ship full of pardons, a cloth-sack full of friars' coats, and all the ceremonies in the world, and all the good works, deservings, and merits of all the men in the world, be they or were they never so holy."

"Some man will ask, peradventure," says Tindale in his preface to the book, "why I take the labour to make this work, inasmuch as they will burn it, seeing they burnt the gospel. I answer, in burning the New Testament they did none other thing than that I looked for : *no more shall they do if they burn me also, if it be God's will it shall so be.*" Tindale was beginning to see that even on the Continent the room was getting too strait for work like his. The four years of exile were telling upon him, the shadow of the end was beginning to fall upon his path. But he goes bravely on, knowing that his duty to God and to his fellow-men constrained him to do just those things that most enraged against him the great officials and the almost resistless power of the Church of Rome.

Tindale's foresight as to the reception his work would meet in England was only too correct. The Archbishop of Canterbury denounced it as containing "many detestable errors and damnable opinions." The united wisdom and piety of prelates and scholars condemned it. Sir Thomas More called it "The Wicked

Book of Mammon, a very treasury and well-spring of wickedness."

Nothing daunted by the reception of *The Wicked Mammon*, Tindale shortly afterwards sent forth from the press his longest and most elaborate composition, *The Obedience of a Christian Man.* This treatise stands second in power and importance only to his great translation. Next to God's Word, it was one of the most potent influences on the side of the Reformation in England. It raised the anger of the Church authorities to fever heat. It rendered them all the more frantic because they could neither prevent its circulation nor could they confute its terse, homely, telling arguments. Tindale threw all his force into the book, and in its pages we see that exile had not deadened his true love for England, and that the study of God's Word had made him wise to discern the signs of the times.

✓ In the body of the book he examines the kind of obedience the Word of God enjoins upon children to their elders, servants to masters, subjects to rulers, etc., and passes on to argue against "the Pope's false power." He next turns to the converse, how a father, a husband, a landlord, a king, a priest ought to rule, working out finally with great elaboration the conclusion that the Pope is Antichrist himself, and after a minute examination of the vices, errors, unscriptural doctrines and practices of the priesthood from the Pope downwards, he reaches this conclusion: "Remember that Christ is the end of all things. He only is our resting-place, He is our peace. For as there is no salvation in any other name, so there is no peace in any other name. Thou shalt never have rest in thy soul, neither shall the worm of conscience ever cease to gnaw thine heart, till thou come at Christ; till thou hear the glad tidings, how that God for His sake hath forgiven thee all freely. If thou trust in thy works, there is no rest. Thou shalt think, I have not done enough. . . . If thou trust in confession then shalt thou think, Have I told all? . . . Likewise in our holy pardons and pilgrimages gettest thou no rest. As pertaining to good deeds therefore, do the best thou canst, and desire God to give strength to do better daily; but in Christ put thy trust, and in the pardon and promises that God hath made thee for His sake; and on that rock build thine house and there dwell."

This teaching stirred the earnest hearts of those who received it like a trumpet call; it came like the sweet pure air of heaven to dwellers in the loathsome atmosphere of a charnel-house. To us the tyranny, the abominations, the ignorance, the slavery under which Englishmen in the sixteenth century groaned are but matters of history. To the men who first read *The Obedience of a Christian Man* they were so many chains that could only be broken by risking all that was most precious, even life itself. ✓

Several incidents of special interest are recorded in which it figures prominently. Bilney, one of the early converts to Protestantism in Henry VIII.'s reign, in 1529 recanted from fear of Tunstal's threats, and for two years suffered the stings of an accusing conscience. At the end of that time "he came at length to some quiet of conscience, being fully resolved to give over his life for the confession of that truth which before he had denounced. He took his leave in Trinity Hall of certain of his friends and said he would go up to Jerusalem. . . . And so, setting forth on his journey toward the celestial Jerusalem, he departed from thence to the anchoress in Norwich and there gave her a New Testament of Tindale's translation and *The Obedience* *of a Christian Man*, whereupon he was apprehended and carried to prison, there to remain till the blind bishop Nixe sent up for a writ to burn him."

Bainham, a London lawyer, had also recanted, but afterwards "was never quiet in mind or conscience until the time he had uttered his fall to all his acquaintance and asked God and all the world forgiveness. And the next Sunday after he came to St. Austin's with the New Testament in his hand in English and *The Obedience of a Christian Man* in his bosom, and stood up there before all the people in his pew, there declaring openly, with weeping tears, that he had denied God." "After this," adds Foxe, "he was strengthened above the cruel death by fire with remarkable courage."

Incidents like these are no mean testimony to the power of Tindale's teaching and the influence he was exerting in his exile over the religious thought and action of the noblest men of his day.

No sooner had *The Wicked Mammon* and *The Obedience* been issued than Tindale proceeded to translate the Old Testament, and published in 1530 the Pentateuch. The one *perfect* copy of this book which has come down to us is in the British Museum, and the colophon reads, "Emprented at Malborow (Marburg), in the lande of Hesse, by me, Hans Luft, the yere of oure Lorde, M.CCCCC.XXX., the XVII dayes of Januarij." Where it was translated and under what circumstances are questions not easy to determine, both from the scanty information we possess and the conflicting nature of it. Of much greater importance is it to get a clear conception of the book itself.

As in the case of the New Testament, Tindale translates direct from the original, and while using the Vulgate, Luther's German Bible, the Septuagint, and in all probability Wyclif's version, he does so with complete independence. Wyclif's manuscript Bible was an all-powerful agent in preparing the way in England for the Reformation.

From the famous prologues we have only space for one extract, taken from the beginning of the prologue to Genesis, and teaching a truth as much needed now as the day it was written. "Though a man had a precious jewel and rich, yet if he wist not the value thereof, nor wherefore it served, he were neither the better nor richer of a straw. Even so, though we read the Scripture, and babble of it never so much, yet if we know not the use of it, and wherefore it was given, and what is therein to be sought, it profiteth us nothing at all. It is not enough, therefore, to read and talk of it only, but we must also desire God, day and night instantly, to open our eyes, and to make us understand and feel wherefore the Scripture was given, that we may apply the medicine of Scripture, every man to his own sores; unless that we intend to be idle disputers and brawlers about vain words, ever gnawing upon the bitter bark without, and never attaining to the sweet pith within."

During 1530 Tindale among other things found time to write his renowned *Practice of Prelates*, a book which points out the *practices* by which the Pope and his priests, from being the humblest and poorest of all, managed to become the haughtiest and richest of men. The oft-quoted "Proper similitude to describe our holy Father" is a fine specimen of Tindale's controversial style: he likens the Pope to the ivy first clinging to and then "sucking the moisture so sore out of the tree and his branches that it choketh and stifleth them," and closing with the words, "The nearer unto Christ a man cometh, the lower he must descend, and the poorer he must wax. But the nearer unto the Pope ye come, the higher ye must climb, and the more riches ye must gather." The book also shows how the power, when obtained, was kept, and how England fared under the rule of Thomas Wolfsee, as he calls Wolsey, who had become "even porter of heaven, so that no man could enter into promotion but through him." It concludes with a solemn appeal and warning to Henry VIII. and the English people.

But we have anticipated somewhat. The circulation of such books as the *English New Testament* and *The Obedience of a Christian Man* convinced the Church authorities that the Romish doctrine and practice must be defended not only by authority, imprisonment, and the stake, but also by argument and literary skill. To one of the most finished scholars and cultured minds of the day was the task entrusted, and to Sir Thomas More, in order that he might refute them, "a formal licence was given to read the heretical books," by Tunstal. The first result was a folio volume, entitled *A Dialogue of Sir Thomas More*, treating of "many things touching the pestilent sect of Luther and Tindale," published in June 1529. In 1531 Tindale published an *Answer*, which met the argumentative subtleties, the submission to Church authority and tradition of More, by one of the best exhibitions in the English language of reasoning under the guidance of "sanctified common-sense." The most telling evidence of the power of Tindale's *Practice of Prelates* and *Answer* is the fact that More, occupying the great office of Chancellor, at once set about a *Confutation* which ultimately extended to 500 folio pages, and which even the author later on admitted men found "over long, and therefore tedious to read."

Tindale, misinformed on several points, and smarting under his wrongs, had used strong language in several parts of his *Answer;* but in this he was no match for his opponent. More describes him as "a shameful, shameless, unreasonable, railing ribald," as one who learned his heresies "from his own father, the devil, that is in hell," as being one of the "hell-hounds that the devil hath in his kennel."

Tindale's friendship with Frith is one of the most touching and sacred experiences of his life. It is hardly possible that they can have met at Oxford; but most probably in London, whilst Tindale was "marking the course of the world," he became acquainted with the young, enthusiastic student, and sowed "in his heart the seed of the Gospel and sincere godliness." From that time until the end of his life Frith was Tindale's "dear son in the faith." He, like his master, found England an ill place for earnest, godly men, and in 1528 he joined Tindale at Marburg. After the fall of Wolsey and the elevation of Cromwell, Henry VIII. seems to have been anxious to detach him from Tindale, and utilise his abilities in his own service. Stephen Vaughan, the English envoy, saw Tindale on several occasions, and did his best to induce Henry VIII. to believe in the true patriotism and noble character of the exile Tindale. It was through Vaughan that Tindale sent the wonderful message, "If it would stand with the King's most gracious pleasure to grant only a bare text of Scripture to be put forth among his people, like as is put forth among the subjects of the Emperor in these parts, and of other Christian princes, *be it of the translation of what person soever shall please His Majesty*, I shall immediately make faithful promise never to write more, nor abide two days in these parts after the same; but immediately to repair into his realm, and there most humbly submit myself at the feet of His Royal Majesty, *offering my* *body to suffer what pain or torture, yea, what death His Grace will, so that this be obtained.*" Henry VIII. turned a deaf ear to his envoy's pleadings, to the touching appeal of Tindale; and Frith refused to be charmed by an offer of Royal favour involving unfaithfulness to his spiritual father.

Frith in 1532 set out, for what reason is not known, on a journey to England. He was arrested, kept in prison for a time, condemned, and on 4th July 1533 died at the stake.

Tindale wrote him two letters, full of fatherly affection and Christian encouragement. The second closes with the statement, full of deep faith and tender pathos: "Sir, your wife is well content with the will of God, and would not, for her sake, have the glory of God hindered."

But three years were to pass and then the master himself was to tread the fiery path along which he was thus exhorting his son in the faith with courage to tread.

There is an intensely tragic interest in the last months of Tindale's life. In England events were rapidly marching towards the consummation he so ardently longed for—the Royal permission for printing and publishing the Bible in English. The years of exile seemed likely to end in a joyous return to his native land. But at the very time that the clouds were lifting over England they were becoming darker over the Netherlands. And after becoming familiar with Tindale's character and work one feels that the sacrifice of his life for the cause to which he had devoted it was the only fitting and appropriate end.

In 1534 Tindale returned to Antwerp. Of the details of his residence there Foxe gives the only complete account that has come down to us, and we shall tell the story very largely in his words.

Tindale lived in the house of an English merchant named Pointz, and while thus sheltered a plot against his life seems to have been formed in England, and a certain Henry Philips sent over to execute it. Tindale occasionally went out to dinner or supper among the English merchants, and Philips managed to make his acquaintance and get on such terms with him that Tindale invited him to Pointz's house. The latter distrusted Philips, but Tindale, slow to think evil of any man, defended him. Philips, having prospered so far in his iniquity, visited Brussels and arranged for the betrayal of Tindale into the hands of the Emperor's officials. Pointz was compelled to leave Antwerp for a few days on business, "and in the time of his absence Henry Philips came again to Antwerp, to the house of Pointz, and coming in spake with his wife, asking her for Master Tindale, and whether he would dine there with him; saying, 'What good meat shall we have?' She answered, 'Such as the market will give.' Then went he forth again (as it is thought) to provide, and set the officers whom he brought with him from Brussels in the street and about the door. Then about noon he came again and went to Master Tindale and desired him to lend him forty shillings; 'for,' said he, 'I lost my purse this morning, coming over at the passage between this and Mechlin.' So Tindale took him forty shillings, which was easy to be had of him, if he had it; for in the wily subtleties of this world he was simple and inexpert. Then said Philips, 'Master Tindale, you shall be my guest here this day.' 'No,' said Tindale, 'I go forth this day to dinner, and you shall go with me and be my guest, where you shall be welcome.' So when it was dinner time Tindale went forth with Philips, and at the going forth of Pointz's house was a long narrow entry, so that two could not go in afront. Master Tindale would have put Philips before him, but Philips would in no wise, but put Master Tindale before, for that he pretended to show great humility. So, Master Tindale being a man of no great stature, went before, and Philips, a tall comely person, followed behind him; who had set officers on either side of the door upon two seats, who, being there, might see who came in at the entry; and coming through the same entry, Philips pointed with his finger over Master Tindale's head down to him, that the officers who sat at the door might see that it was he whom they should take, as the officers that took Master Tindale afterwards told Pointz, and said to Pointz, when they had laid him in prison, that they pitied to see his simplicity when they took him. Then they took him and brought him to the Emperor's attorney, or procuror-general, where he dined. Then came the procuror-general to the house of Pointz, and sent away all that was there of Master Tindale's, as well his books as other things; and from thence Tindale was had to the castle of Filford (Vilvorde), eighteen English miles from Antwerp, and there he remained until he was put to death."

Tindale lingered in prison for over a year, and during that time wrote the only letter that has come down to us in his own handwriting. It is written in Latin and addressed to the Governor of the Castle of Vilvorde. We give Demaus's translation:

> I believe, right worshipful, that you are not ignorant of what has been determined concerning me (by the Council of Brabant); therefore I entreat your Lordship and that by the Lord Jesus; that if I am to remain here (in Vilvorde) during the winter, you will request the Procureur to be kind enough to send me, from my goods which he has in his possession, a warmer cap, for I suffer extremely from cold in the head, being afflicted with a perpetual catarrh, which is considerably increased in the cell.

A warmer coat also, for that which I have is very thin: also a piece of cloth to patch my leggings: my overcoat has been worn out; my shirts are also worn out. He has a woollen shirt of mine, if he will be kind enough to send it. I have also with him leggings of thicker cloth for putting on above; he also has warmer caps for wearing at night. I wish also his permission to have a candle in the evening, for it is wearisome to sit alone in the dark. But above all, I entreat and beseech your clemency to be urgent with the Procureur that he may kindly permit me to have my Hebrew Bible, Hebrew Grammar, and Hebrew Dictionary, that I may spend my time with that study. And in return, may you obtain your dearest wish, provided always it be consistent with the salvation of your soul. But if any other resolution has been come to concerning me, that I must remain during the whole winter, I shall be patient, abiding the will of God to the glory of the grace of my Lord Jesus Christ, whose Spirit, I pray, may ever direct your heart. Amen.—W. TINDALE.

Many efforts were made to save Tindale both in Belgium and in England. But it was not to be. "At last after much reasoning, where no reason would serve, although he deserved no death, he was condemned by virtue of the Emperor's decree, made in the assembly at Augsburg, and, upon the same, brought forth to the place of execution, was there tied to the stake, and then strangled first by the hangman, and afterwards with fire consumed in the morning, at the town of Filford, A.D. 1536; crying thus at the stake with a fervent zeal and loud voice, 'Lord! open the King of England's eyes!'"

Thus closed this life of faith, occupied up to the last with that labour of love which has been ever since its completion the source of countless blessings to the English-speaking peoples, and through them to the world. To a great extent Tindale's marvellous work and incalculable influence have been scantily recognised as *his* by his countrymen. But, like the highest lives, his influence grows and grows as generation follows generation. His greatness becomes more and more clear as he is looked at more and more closely in his work. He was simple in his childlikeness ; unceasing in his labours ; Christlike in his compassionate efforts to do good to all ; heroic in his death.

HUGH LATIMER

By
(1485–1555)

Charles Marson, M.A.

HUGH LATIMER was born at Thurcaston, a little village at the foot of the Charnwood hills, a few miles from the town of Leicester. "My father," he told King Edward VI., when preaching before him in 1549, "was a yeoman, and had no lands of his own: only he had a farm of three or four pounds by year; and thereupon he tilled so much as kept half-a-dozen men. He had walk for a hundred sheep; and my mother milked thirty kine. He was able, and did find the King a harness, with himself and his horse. . . . He kept me to school, or else I had not been able to have preached before the King's Majesty now. He married my sisters with five pounds or twenty nobles apiece; so that he brought them up in godliness and fear of God. He kept hospitality for his poor neighbours, and some alms he gave to the poor."

"Wise Solon," says Thomas Fuller, "would surely have pronounced the English yeomanry a 'fortunate condition,' living in the temperate zone betwixt greatness and want, an estate of people almost peculiar to England." Certain it is that for centuries this class have best represented the sturdy independence and general character of the nation. In after days, too, Latimer delighted to claim for men of his condition a

HUGH LATIMER.

still higher praise. "By yeomen's sons," he told King Edward VI., "the faith of Christ is and hath been maintained chiefly. Is this realm taught by rich men's sons? No, no. Read the chronicles: ye shall find sometimes noblemen's sons which have been unpreaching bishops and prelates, but ye shall find none of them learned men."

The good yeoman had a large family: six daughters and some boys who all died in infancy. Hugh was the sole surviving son, and probably the youngest. There is some uncertainty as to the year of his birth, but assuming 1484 or 1485 to be the most likely date, little Hugh came into the world about the close of the brief reign of Richard III.

Latimer seems to have been a sickly child, but gave early promise of mental ability. "Even at the age of four, or thereabout," says old Foxe, "he had such a ready, prompt, and sharp wit, that his parents purposed to train him up in erudition and knowledge of good literature." Accordingly he was kept to school, instead of early following his father to the fields. One part of his son's education, indeed, the good man himself undertook. "My poor father," says he, "was as diligent to teach me to shoot as to learn me any other thing; and so I think other men did their children. He taught me how to draw, how to lay my body in my bow, and not to draw with strength of arms as other nations do, but with strength of the body. I had my bows bought me according to my age and strength; as I increased in them, so my bows were made bigger and bigger: for men shall never shoot well except they be brought up in it; it is a goodly art, a wholesome kind of exercise, and much commended in physic."

One incident only of his early years is recorded, and that by himself. His father was hastily summoned by

King Henry VII. to aid in putting down the rebellion of the Cornish men in 1497, and "I can remember," says he, "that I buckled his harness when he went into Blackheath Field."

At the common schools of his county little Hugh made such good progress that, at the age of fourteen, his father resolved to send him to the University. Accordingly, somewhere about the year 1506, he was removed from home, and became a Cambridge student. No record of his undergraduate days has come down to us, except that in 1510 he was elected to a Fellowship in Clare Hall, at an unusually early period, before he had taken his B.A. degree—a sufficient testimony to his learning and ability. He proceeded in due course to the higher degree of M.A. in 1514, became what was styled a Regent in the University, taking some share in the education of the students, and after "some continuance of exercises in other things," made choice of the clerical profession and the study of Divinity, and was ordained at Lincoln. In 1522 his ability as a preacher seems already to have been recognised, for we find him appointed by the University one of the twelve Cambridge preachers licensed to officiate in any part of England; and in 1524, at the ripe age of forty years, he proceeded to the degree of Bachelor of Divinity.

During the eighteen years of Latimer's University life two great changes were at work in the world and the Church: the revival of learning and the Reformation of religion. The scholars of the day were devoting themselves to the study of the great classical writers of Greece and Rome, long neglected and forgotten; while among men of more earnest and spiritual natures there was increasing a deep and heartfelt longing for truth and reality in religion, and a thirst for the knowledge of Christ and His pure Gospel. Both these new movements of mind were felt in the English Universities, and to Cambridge especially Erasmus, the great Greek scholar, by his residence there, had imparted an impulse alike in favour of classical learning and of Scriptural study. His edition of the New Testament in Greek, with its Latin translation and notes, which appeared in 1516, after his departure from England, was hailed with delight by the new generation of scholars and learned men; but to the devout study of it by one solitary member of the University, Thomas Bilney, Fellow of Trinity Hall, the origin of the Reformation movement in Cambridge may be traced. "At the first reading," says he, "as I well remember, I chanced upon this sentence of St. Paul: 'It is a true saying, and worthy of all men to be embraced, that Christ Jesus came into the world to save sinners; of whom I am the chief and principal.'[1] This one sentence, through God's instruction and inward working, which I did not then perceive, did so exhilarate my heart, being before wounded with the guilt of my sins, and almost in despair, that immediately I felt a marvellous comfort and quietness, insomuch that my bruised bones leapt for joy."

It was a repetition of the experience of Luther, in his monk's cell at Erfurt; and Bilney, having found peace and comfort to himself, desired to draw to the same knowledge of God in Christ Jesus all who came nigh him. Gradually the leaven of his teaching began to work. A society of Scripture students was formed in Cambridge, of which Bilney was the centre, and when Luther's books began to be known and circulated in England, copies were eagerly read by this little band. One of Bilney's disciples, George Stafford, being made

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[1] 1 Timothy i. 15.

Reader in Divinity, introduced a startling innovation. Discarding the old scholastic text-books, he not only read Lectures from St. Augustine, but expounded Holy Scripture itself, both Old Testament and New, in the original languages, to crowds of listening students.

The advocates of the old system of things—and they were not a few in Cambridge—alarmed and scandalised by these heretical novelties, at once set themselves in opposition to them. Among the most zealous and able of the alarmists was Hugh Latimer. "All the days of his University life he had bestowed his time in the labyrinth study of the School Doctors, such as Duns Scotus, Thomas Aquinas, and Hugo de St. Victor," etc., and, as he afterwards confessed, "I was as obstinate a Papist as any was in England." For his gravity of life and undoubted orthodoxy he had been chosen University Cross-bearer, and no priest more scrupulously and conscientiously observed all the regulations of the missal, or conformed more devoutly to the rites of his Church, than he.

Stafford's lectures stirred him to the utmost indignation. "Standing in the schools when Master Stafford read," says Foxe, "he bade the scholars not to hear him; and, also, preaching against him, exhorted the people not to believe him." Not content with this, on occasion of receiving the degree of Bachelor of Divinity, his whole oration before the University "went against Philip Melanchthon" and the newly-received Lutheran opinions. "But," says the old chronicler, "such was the goodness and merciful purpose of God, that when Latimer thought by that his oration to have utterly defaced the professors of the Gospel and true Church of Christ, he was himself, by a member of the same, prettily, yet godly, catched in the blessed net of God's Word. For Master Thomas

Bilney, seeing Master Latimer to have a zeal in his ways, although without knowledge, was stricken with a brotherly pity, and bethought by what means he might best win this his zealous yet ignorant brother to the true knowledge of Christ."

The expedient he adopted may be best described in Latimer's own words: "Pretending as though he would be taught by me, he sought ways and means to teach me. He came to me in my study, and desired me for God's sake to hear his confession. I did so, and to say the truth, by his confession I learned more than before in many years. So from that time forward I began *to smell the Word of God* and forsook the School Doctors and such fooleries."

Whatever Latimer did, he did heartily. Slow and even timid in embracing a new opinion, his mind once made up, he never hesitated to act, and to act decidedly. When convinced of his former errors he went again to the Divinity School, and there, before the students, humbly begged pardon of Mr. Stafford, the lecturer, for "his former fierce and causeless fury against him." He openly joined the little despised band of whom Bilney was the leader, and soon became his ardent friend and helper in all his labours of piety and charity. Together they visited the sick and the lepers—and the prisoners in Cambridge jail, "exhorting them," he says, "as well as we were able to do: moving them to patience and to acknowledge their faults." And so well known was the friendship of these once widely separated opponents in the University, that their place of meeting, nigh to Cambridge, was known long after as "the Heretics' Walk."

"After this his winning to Christ," says Foxe, "he was not satisfied with his own conversion only; but, like a true disciple of the blessed Samaritan, pitied the misery of others, and therefore he became both a public preacher and also a private instructor to the rest of his brethren within the University by the space of two years, spending his time partly in the Latin tongue amongst the learned, and partly amongst the simple people in his natural and vulgar language."

We must not, however, suppose that at this period Latimer's opinions were as Scriptural and Protestant as they afterwards became. Bilney and his friends were not separatists from the National Church, had no new creed, no new form of worship. Latimer was still as before a priest of Rome. On two points, however, he saw clearly and spake out boldly:—(1) That Christ's atonement for sin being all-sufficient, penances, invocations of saints, and man's merits must not be suffered to take the place of it. (2) That the current ideas of holiness were thoroughly unscriptural and unsound, and that "voluntary works," "creeping to the Cross on Good Friday," decorating images, and offering candles at shrines, pilgrimages, ceremonies, Pope's indulgences, oblations, and monkish vows and devotions, were no substitutes whatsoever for doing justly, loving mercy, and walking humbly with God.

His fame was soon very great in Cambridge as a preacher. He was ardent, energetic, eloquent—above all, downright and plain-spoken,—from the first "a seditious fellow," as a noble lord called him in later life—highly troublesome to evil-doers and unjust persons in authority, specially to such as made a trade of godliness. We have the testimony of a young student of St. John's College, Thomas Becon, an eager listener to Latimer's University Sermons, as to the effects they produced in those days: "Oh! how vehement was he in rebuking all sins, idolatry, false and idle swearing, covetousness! How was he wont to rebuke the beneficed men for neglecting and not teaching their flock, and for being absent from their cures! How free was his speech against buying and selling of benefices, against promoting unlearned, ignorant men to livings; against Popish pardons, and reposing our hope in our own works or other men's merits! None except the stiff-necked and uncircumcised ever went away from his preaching without being affected with high detestation against sin, and moved to all godliness and virtue."

As might be expected, Latimer soon raised up a host of furious enemies. "Swarms of friars and doctors flocked against Master Latimer on every side. Openly in their unsavoury sermons, they resisted his godly purpose," and loud complaints were made against him of heretical doctrine to his Diocesan, Dr. West, the Bishop of Ely. That prelate, curious to hear the truth, determined with himself to come to the church, "withouten any intelligence to be given to Latimer"; and so it came to pass, that on a time he "came secretly and suddenly from Ely and entered into the University Church, accompanied with certain men of worship, Latimer being then well entered into his sermon." Latimer, surprised but not disconcerted, calmly waited till the Bishop and his train were seated, then resumed his discourse, but adroitly changed the subject. "A new auditory," he said, "being of more honourable rank, requireth a new theme." Then taking for his text the words, "Christ being come an High Priest of good things to come,"[1] etc., he drew from them the picture of an ideal bishop, as a bishop ought to be, the features of which, though he did not say so, were strikingly unlike those of his hearer. The Bishop, "never a whit amended by the sermon," spoke civilly to Latimer, but ever after bare a secret grudge against him. He soon forbade his preaching in the University pulpit, and not long after complained to Cardinal Wolsey (then in the height of his power) against him, as one "infected with the new fantastical doctrine of Luther, and doing much harm among the youth and other light heads of the University by it."

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[1] Hebrews ix. 11.

Wolsey summoned Latimer before him, but with his keen shrewd sense quickly perceived him to be very different from "the light-headed fellow without learning" whom his enemies had depicted.

After some talk, he inquired what it was that he had preached before the Bishop to have given such offence; and Latimer, "plainly and simply (committing his cause unto Almighty God) declared to the Cardinal the whole effect of the sermon which the Bishop of Ely had heard."

Wolsey, "nothing at all misliking the doctrine of the Word of God thus preached," said unto him: "Did you not preach any other doctrine than you have rehearsed?"

"No, surely," said Latimer. Then said the Cardinal: "If the Bishop of Ely cannot abide such doctrine as you have here repeated, you shall have my licence and preach it to his beard, let him say what he will."

Thus fortified, Latimer went on his way, careless of the University authorities, and the next holiday after entered into the pulpit and showed his licence to preach throughout England, contrary to all men's expectation.

On the disgrace of Wolsey, however, not long after, Latimer would certainly have been silenced; and had he fallen into the hands of the King's new Chancellor, Sir Thomas More, that heretic-hunter might have antedated his martyrdom by at least a quarter of a century. But at this time the providence of God raised him up unexpected friends in higher quarters.

Amongst the controversies every day waxing louder and fiercer in the Universities and the whole realm, there rose up one which, for a time, absorbed every other, and divided all England into two hostile camps. It was concerned with the question of the lawfulness or unlawfulness of King Henry VIII.'s divorce from Catherine of Aragon. We need not enter into the complications, beside the main question, with which men's religious and political views entangled this subject. Suffice it to say, that just at this particular time the controversy had come to turn on this one point: If the marriage with a brother's widow be forbidden in Holy Scripture, has, or has not, the Pope, notwithstanding, authority to permit it? The English Reformers answered at once: "The Pope cannot allow what the Word of God forbids. The King's marriage, therefore, with his brother Arthur's widow, having been contracted contrary to the Divine Law, though allowed by Papal dispensation, is *ipso facto* null and void."

In 1530, by the advice of Dr. Cranmer, this marriage question was referred for decision not to the Court of Rome, but to the Universities of Christendom, and amongst others to Cambridge. Twenty-seven delegates, of whom Latimer was one, were chosen to discuss the matter, and on 15th February it was argued before the Commissioners. Sir William Butts, the King's physician, who was present, struck by Latimer's courage and ability, highly commended him to the King on his return. Henry, of whom it was said that he never was mistaken in a man—loving "a *man*," when he could find him, with all his heart—

invited Latimer to preach before him at Windsor on the second Sunday in Lent, 13th March 1530. His sermon was "greatly praised," and, as Latimer himself tells us, "after it was done His Majesty did most familiarly talk with me in a gallery." He was shortly after put on the Royal Commission of twelve learned men of Cambridge for examining printed books, and a little later made one of the Royal Chaplains.

Latimer now left Cambridge and removed to Windsor, but only to treat his Royal patron as freely as he had treated the Cambridge friars and doctors —not with an absence of respect, for he was most respectful, but with that highest respect which dares to speak unwelcome truth when the truth seems to be forgotten. "You that be of the Court, and especially ye sworn Chaplains," he said long afterwards, "beware of a lesson that a great man taught me at my first coming to Court. He told me for good-will; he thought it well. He said to me, 'You must beware, howsoever ye do, that ye contrary not the King; let him have his sayings; follow him; go with him.' Marry! out upon such counsel! Shall I say as he says? *Say your conscience, or else what a worm shall ye feel gnawing!* What a remorse of conscience shall ye have when ye remember how ye have slacked your duty! Yet a prince must be turned not violently; he must be won by a little and a little. He must have his duty told him, but with humbleness, with request of pardon, or else it were a dangerous thing."

As an example of Latimer's own practice in this particular, the noble and dignified letter of remonstrance still remains which he felt it his duty to write to King Henry on the Proclamation, December 1530, against the having and reading of the English New Testament. An address, says an eminent writer, "of almost unexampled grandeur," showing how a poor clergyman, for conscience' sake, could brave the wrath of that king which his highest counsellors never dared to stir up by ill-timed faithfulness.

But though assured of the favour and respect of his Sovereign, the atmosphere of a Court soon became wearisome to a man like Latimer, and on the King offering him, in the year 1531, the benefice of West Kington, near Chippenham, and some fourteen miles from Bristol, he gladly accepted it, and notwithstanding the remonstrances of his Court friends, " he would needs depart and be resident at the same."

Whether or no Latimer came down to his little country cure looking for rest and retirement, he certainly did not find these blessings at West Kington. He continued there four years, and they were years of constant work, exciting controversy, and personal danger.

The ordinary pastoral work of a country parish he found to demand much time and pains ; and he often wondered, when so " much was to be done in a small cure," how men could "go quietly to bed who had great cures and many, and yet peradventure were in none of them at all." The gross ignorance and superstition of the West Country folk deeply moved him. Accordingly we find that in public preaching and teaching he was instant in season and out of season, both within his parish and without. Having a special licence from the University to preach in any diocese, with the King's express sanction, he freely availed himself of it. There are traces of his labours in Marshfield, Dereham, and the city of Bristol. In the London Diocese also, and even so far away as Kent, we are told of his preaching, " at the instant request of certain curates." But it was in London, and subsequently in Bristol, that he had to encounter his bitterest foes and his greatest dangers.

Stokesley, Bishop of London, a zealous Papist, of whom even Bonner complained as "a vexer and troubler of poor men," had long wished to get Latimer into his clutches, and at last succeeded. For a sermon preached in St. Mary Abchurch, City, "at the request of a Company of merchants," he was summoned from West Kington in January 1532, and compelled to appear before the Bishop, who, with other prelates, examined him at various times, offering for his signature Articles on the points wherein his orthodoxy was suspected. On his refusal to sign, he was brought before Convocation, pronounced contumacious, excommunicated, and imprisoned under charge of Warham, the Archbishop of Canterbury.

The clergy felt that Latimer was the most dangerous opponent they had in the kingdom, and sought in every way to entangle him into compromising confessions, which might lead him at last to the stake. But the protecting care of God seems to have been always round him, and he was as keen and shrewd as he was brave and faithful. His enemies were marvellously restrained from carrying their malice to extremities, and he baffled his inquisitors with their own weapons. At the last moment Latimer appealed to the King. "Ye would have raked me in the coals," he afterwards told the Convocation, "because I would not subscribe to certain Articles that took away the supremacy of the King." To the theological propositions submitted to him Latimer told the Archbishop he was ready to subscribe, as lawful in themselves; but scrupled to do so, lest he should seem to sanction the abuses which had arisen from them. Henry heard his appeal, recommended him to submit generally to

Convocation, and to promise to be more careful in his preaching. He also intimated to Convocation that it was his pleasure that the matter should proceed no further. Latimer obeyed, and Convocation obeyed. He subscribed the obnoxious Articles, made his submission, was absolved from excommunication, and went back to his country parish after a detention of many months, "a brand" literally "snatched from the burning."

Latimer's troubles in Bristol happened later, and though not exposing him to such imminent danger as in London, made considerable stir at the time, and threatened to jeopardise the peace of the city. In March 1533 he was invited to preach by several of the parish clergy. The effect of these sermons was such that all Bristol was in an uproar. Latimer had as usual attacked the popular abuses of the Church's doctrines which tended to superstition and immorality, and as usual was denounced by such as had a vested interest in those abuses as a heretic and almost an atheist. An inhibition was secretly procured by certain of the clergy against any preacher without the Bishop's licence, to hinder his ministry, and "not content therewith," he says, "they procured certain preachers to blatter against me." These perverted Latimer's words in the grossest manner, and not content with abusing Latimer, their zeal for the Pope urged them upon the dangerous ground of politics, and they assailed the King's supremacy in such wise that the loyal citizens of Bristol took great displeasure thereat. Disturbances arose, which attracted the attention of Government. A Commission was sent down to Bristol to investigate, and several of the most disloyal of the offenders were committed to prison. Latimer was permitted to answer for himself, and was not only vindicated, but received the new Primate's licence to preach anywhere in the province of Canterbury. Thus his adversaries were ashamed and confounded.

Meanwhile events of the gravest importance for England had been taking place: Queen Catherine's divorce; Henry's marriage with Anne Boleyn; Cranmer's elevation to the See of Canterbury, and Thomas Cromwell's to the office of Secretary of State—and the final rupture between the Crown and the Popedom. The "old order" rapidly passing was giving place to the "new"; and the men of the "new learning" were coming to the front, occupying spheres of wider activity and responsibility. Chief among these was Latimer. He was called from his retirement, and associated with Cranmer and Cromwell in the work of the Reformation. We find him on the Commission appointed to detect the imposture of the Nun of Kent; nominated preacher before the King on the Wednesdays in Lent for 1534; invested with authority by the Primate to administer the Royal Injunctions on the supremacy to all licensed preachers within the province of Canterbury; and finally consecrated Lord Bishop of Worcester, 26th September 1535, at the age of fifty-one.

Never did diocese more urgently need the watchful care of an able, zealous, and godly bishop than the Diocese of Worcester. Of great extent, including the counties of Worcester, Warwick, Gloucester, and the city of Bristol, it was the most neglected See in England, even in those days of negligence. For the past forty years it had been held by a succession of Italian bishops, all non-resident, and its administration committed to men who were either greedy to make the most of its secular revenues, or blind, persecuting advocates of the ancient superstitions.

No See abounded more in monks and monasteries, and the ignorance of the clergy was deplorable, well-nigh incredible. When Bishop Hooper,[1] in 1551, examined the dean, prebendaries, vicars, and curates of Gloucestershire, he found that out of three hundred and eleven clergy, one hundred and sixty-eight were unable to repeat the Ten Commandments; thirty-one of the one hundred and sixy-eight could not state in what part of Scripture they were to be found; forty could not tell where the Lord's Prayer was written; and thirty-one of the forty were ignorant who was the Author of it.

Such an Augean stable needed the arm of a Hercules to sweep and purify it, and what one brave and able man could do in such times doubtless Latimer did. But he held his office only four years, and in so brief a period vital and permanent changes could hardly be looked for.

Notwithstanding the large revenue of his See, he appropriated nothing to his own benefit, and at the time he relinquished his office he was probably nearly penniless, if not actually in debt. He kept open house and a hospitable table; but rather for the poor than the rich. "I am more inclined," he writes, "to feed many plainly and necessarily than a few deliciously and voluptuously. As for plate and hangings, they have not cost me *twenty shillings*. In plate my New Year's gifts doth my need with glass and byrral; and I delight more to feed hungry bellies than to clothe dead walls."[2]

During his short episcopate he had the satisfaction of seeing the Bible printed in English, and allowed by Royal Licence "to be sold or read of every person without danger of any act, proclamation, or ordinance heretofore granted to the contrary." He also witnessed some of the more intolerable abuses and impostures detected, exposed, and swept away for ever. Famous images and relics, by which a crafty priesthood had deceived the ignorant and credulous people, he himself was a main instrument in holding up to scorn and devoting to destruction. The "holy rood of Bexley," "the sweet rood of Ramsbury," the famous "Sibyl," a very sacred image of the Virgin in Worcester Cathedral, "her old sister of Walsingham, her young sister of Ipswich, with their other sisters of Doncaster and Penrise, and the great Welsh idol 'Dderfel Gadern,' and others beside," met with ignominious ends; and the "great abomination of the blood of Hales," an object of adoration of so many deluded country folk, was "bolted and sifted" by the Bishop himself, and proved to be "a few drops of yellowish gum-like bird-lime," probably "melted honey, coloured with saffron."

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[1] Bishop Hooper's "Visitation Books," *Works* (Parker Soc.), vol. ii. p. 150.

[2] Latimer to Lord Cromwell, *Works* (Parker Soc.), vol. ii. p. 412.

But Latimer not only attacked evil, he also fostered and established the good. He succeeded in dividing his work, by obtaining the aid of a suffragan Bishop of Bristol; he invited able preachers to visit "the blind corners of his diocese"; he had a hand in the composition, with other prelates, of a work calculated to advance the Reformation a step farther among the people, *The Institution of a Christian Man;* and, above all, he himself preached constantly and indefatigably.

But his labours were not confined to the Diocese of Worcester: his influence was felt throughout the kingdom, and specially by his preaching in the Court, before the clergy in Convocation, and in the London churches to the citizens, the truths of the Gospel, as understood by him at the time. His mind was not too far in advance of his age, but just enough to secure the sympathy and attention of his countrymen; while the outspoken practical tone of his discourses was best of all adapted to the national character. His name was in every one's mouth, and his doctrines everywhere the theme of discussion.

His boldness in rebuking even the King's Majesty himself during these years for conscience' sake is shown in a well-known anecdote. At the time of Henry's neglect of Queen Anne Boleyn, and his undisguised preference for Jane Seymour, the bishops brought, according to custom, their New Year's gifts to Court. "Some," says the old chronicler, "did gratify the King with gold, some with silver, some with a purse full of money, some one thing, some another. But Master Latimer, being Bishop of Worcester, then among the rest presented a New Testament for his gift, with a napkin having this motto upon it, *Fornicatores et Adulteres judicabit Dominus*"—"Whoremongers and adulterers God will judge."

In 1539 Latimer's episcopate suddenly came to a close. King Henry, in one of the reactionary states of mind common with him in his later years, put forth the celebrated "Act for abolishing diversity of opinions," better known now as "The Act of the Six Articles," enforcing, under cruel penalties—(1) Transubstantiation and the Real Presence; (2) Communion in one kind only; (3) Clerical celibacy; (4) Vows of chastity; (5) Private masses; (6) Auricular confession. Latimer and others strenuously withstood both King and Parliament during the debates upon this Act, but in vain. Three days afterwards he and Bishop Shaxton of Salisbury resigned their Sees, to the great displeasure of the King. Foxe tells us that "at the time Latimer put off his rochet in his chamber among his friends, he gave a skip on the floor for joy, feeling his shoulder so light, and being discharged, as he said, of such a heavy burden. Howbeit, neither was he so lightened but that troubles and labours followed him." His first trouble was his committal to the custody of Sampson, Bishop of Chichester, in whose house he was detained for some time a prisoner.

Of the next seven years of Latimer's life we have very little account. From vague hints here and there among the State Papers, we may gather that he was from time to time in great danger, being "molested and troubled of the Popish Bishops," and it is certain that he was a prisoner in the Tower when King Henry died and Edward VI. succeeded to the crown. After a detention of nearly a twelvemonth in the Bishop of Chichester's house, he seems to have been released in the year 1540, but "forbidden to preach, or to come within five miles of his old diocese, or of the two Universities, or of the City of London." Thus reduced to silence and obscurity, we may conjecture that he spent his time in visiting among his friends in various parts of the country.

What caused his committal to the Tower in 1546 was the support he gave to Dr. Crome, who boldly attacked purgatory in the spring of that year, in the Mercers' Chapel, London. He was brought before the Council on 31st May, and though he appealed to, and was probably heard before, King Henry, his appeal was of no avail. He was pronounced intractable, and remanded as a prisoner. In the Tower he remained till the death of Henry, within a twelvemonth after. Thus closes all we know of Latimer during those dark and troublous days. On the day of the coronation of the boy-king, Edward VI., the prison doors were opened ; he was at once released and treated with every mark of respect.

The accession of the youthful Edward brought days of hope and promise to the friends of the Truth in England. The young King was wholly on their side.

"Brought up with noble counsellors," says Latimer, "and excellent and well-learned schoolmasters, was there ever king so noble, so godly? I will tell you this, and I speak it even as I think, His Majesty hath more godly wit and understanding, more learning and knowledge at his age, than twenty of his progenitors that I could name had at any time of their life."

On Latimer's release from prison his former bishopric was offered him; but he was now "above threescore and seven years of age, and a sore-bruised man"; he felt himself all too weak for a burden that had well-nigh crushed him in bygone years, and he refused to accept it. Moreover, he wisely considered wherein his true strength lay. God had specially gifted him for a preacher of the Gospel, and as a preacher henceforth he laboured.

"For nearly eight years silent," says Froude, "he now entered upon the fiery course which earned him the name of the 'Apostle of England.' He preached in the Court, in the city, and in the country, and his sermons shook the whole land." Wherever he went crowded audiences hung upon his lips. "The character of the man," says the Roman Catholic Dr. Lingard, "the boldness of his invectives, his quaint but animated eloquence, were observed to make a deep impression on the minds of his hearers." When he preached before the King it was found necessary to set up a pulpit in the Royal gardens, in order to admit of space for the multitude that thronged to hear him; and on one occasion when he preached at St. Margaret's, Westminster, the crowd was so great that the pews were broken in pieces.

During the earlier part of Edward VI.'s reign he resided chiefly in London, under the hospitable roof of his old friend Archbishop Cranmer, and few figures were more familiar or more welcome to the Londoners than that of the stout-hearted old preacher, staff in hand, his Bible in his girdle, "his spectacles hanging by a string at his breast." We are told "that as he passed along the streets, the very boys cheered him as he went, while the citizens struggled for a touch of his gown, and as he approached his pulpit, greeted him with some hearty word of encouragement 'to say on.'" In the latter part of Edward's reign we find him mostly in the Midland counties of England: Warwickshire, Leicestershire, and specially in Lincolnshire, preaching wherever his services seemed most required.

Some forty or more sermons of his have come down to us; and though it is as difficult to form an idea from these imperfectly reported discourses what they were when spoken as it is to gather from an old dried and withered garland what the flowers must have been in their fresh and fragrant brightness, still the attentive reader will by degrees form a tolerable estimate of the power of his words. In doctrine he was thoroughly clear and Scriptural: ruin by the fall, redemption by the precious blood of Christ, renewal by the Holy Spirit, are constantly set forth. In seeking for fruits he never forgets the root; but he never neglects to insist on fruit from all who profess to have the root of the matter in them. "It is the duty of a preacher," he says, "to exhort his hearers that they be Christians after such a sort, that, suffering here together with Christ, they may reign with Him in heaven; teaching them that to be otherwise a Christian is to be no Christian at all. If dead faith makes a catholic, the very devils belong to the Catholic Church; for they, according to St. James, 'believe and tremble.'"

As a *practical* preacher Latimer has never been surpassed, and his boldness in rebuking the characteristic faults of his hearers few have ever even imitated. Scarcely a sin of the day in any rank of society was unnoticed and unreproved by this unsparing man of God. Rapacious nobles, greedy church-despoiling courtiers, bribing judges, non-resident landlords, debasers of the coinage, government officials who delay the payment of their workmen, patrons of livings who put a fool or an idler into a benefice, unpreaching bishops, clergy who neglect the sick and poor, or make a religion of "holy bells and holy water," "crossings and setting up of candles and such fooleries," aldermen keeping up the price of coal, rent-raisers, extortioners and usurers who take forty per cent, rogues who make false returns in taxing papers, graziers who "sell barren cows, by putting another calf with her as if it were her own," corn merchants who keep back corn for high prices, wool-sellers who make wool heavier than it really is by deceitful weights, cloth-makers who by "flock powder and racking make a piece of seventeen yards an extra yard longer," sly preachers who "sometimes preach a good sermon and then slip in one little piece of Popery like a blanched almond to powder their matter with"; and on the other hand the "carnal gospellers" who bear the name but "grudge the deeds of the true gospeller," "card gospellers," "dice gospellers," "pot gospellers," who "do what they can to buckle the Gospel and the world together, to set God and the Devil at one table"—all these hear of their deeds, and are rebuked face to face. Even the women "who rule their husbands" and "apparel themselves gorgeously" in "vardingales" and "roundabouts," and "lay their hair in tussocks, tufts, and curls," to nourish pride, are sharply condemned and bidden to obey their husbands, keep at home, and look to their children. Bishop Ridley might well say of Latimer and such as he: "England! thou didst hear thy faults of all degrees and sorts of men never more plainly told than in King Edward's time!"

But a fiery trial was at hand. King Edward died on 6th July 1553. After a brief struggle, his elder sister, Mary, succeeded to the throne of England.

Latimer was in Warwickshire when the news of the young King's untimely death reached him, but, though deeply grieved, he was not surprised. He had long foreseen some such calamity impending. He had been wont to affirm that the preaching of the Gospel would cost him his life, and that Gardiner, Bishop of Winchester, would be the means of bringing it about. He quietly waited, therefore, for the summons which he felt sure would not be long delayed, and on 4th September, two months after Edward's death, it came. A pursuivant was sent to require him to appear before the Council at Westminster, and he at once obeyed. As he passed through Smithfield, where so many had suffered martyrdom before, he "merrily" remarked that "the place had long groaned for him."

On the 13th September Latimer stood before the Council, where his "demeanour" was what they were pleased to call "seditious." His own account is: "I had nothing but scornful jeers, with commandment to the Tower." To the Tower he was committed accordingly, and there remained a close prisoner all through the autumn and cold winter of 1553, till the spring following. Ridley was already there, and Cranmer was consigned to the same prison the day after Latimer. At first the three distinguished Reformers were kept separate, though permitted to communicate with each other by writing; but after Wyatt's insurrection, the Tower becoming overcrowded with prisoners, Cranmer, Ridley, and Latimer, "as men not to be accounted of," were "put all together in one prison," and John Bradford, Latimer's convert and Ridley's friend, was soon after added to their company. "God be thanked," says Latimer, "it was to our great joy and comfort." For nearly two months, from the beginning of February to the end of March 1554, they thus continued, and "we did together read," says Latimer, "the New Testament with great deliberation and painful study."

In March 1554, after a six months' imprisonment, Latimer, Cranmer, and Ridley were brought down to Oxford, to dispute before the Queen's Commissioners on the following questions:—

1st. Whether the natural body of Christ was really in the Sacrament?

2nd. Whether any other substance did remain after the words of consecration than the body of Christ?

3rd. Whether in the mass there was a propitiatory sacrifice for the sins of quick and dead?

The day fixed for the disputation to commence was Monday, 16th April; the place chosen the University Church of St. Mary. On that day Cranmer disputed; on the Tuesday, Ridley; on the Wednesday, Latimer was summoned to answer for himself.

Upwards of seventy years old, weak with long imprisonment and sickness, he declared he was as "unfit to dispute as to be Captain of Calais," and offered instead a statement of his opinions in writing. This was refused with derision, and from eight till eleven of the clock he was challenged, questioned, contradicted, interrupted, pressed with syllogism on syllogism, in order to his confutation. "Divers had snatches at him, and gave him bitter taunts, and he did not escape hissings and scornful laughings. He was very faint, and desired that he might not long tarry. He durst not drink for fear of vomiting."

But, weak as he was, nothing shook his resolute adherence to the Truth. "The Queen's grace is merciful," said the Prolocutor at last, "if ye will turn." Latimer answered: "You shall have no hope in me to turn. I pray for the Queen daily, even from the bottom of my heart, that she may turn from this your religion."

The three prisoners were formally condemned for heresy, and sent back into separate confinement; but for eighteen months longer the execution of Ridley and Latimer was delayed. We catch a glimpse or two of old Latimer and his behaviour during this weary time of expectation, from the words of his faithful servant Bernher: "I did note," he says, "that he most of all did rejoice that God had given him grace to apply his office of preaching, and assisted him without fear or flattery to tell unto the wicked their faults. The other thing I did notice was his earnestness and diligence in prayer, wherein so long he continued kneeling that he was not able to rise without help, and amongst other things he prayed for three principal matters. The first, that God would help him to stand to his doctrine until his death. The other thing was that God would restore the Gospel of Christ unto this realm once again. And these words, 'once again, once again,' he did so inculcate and beat into the ears of the Lord God, as though he had seen God before him, and spake unto Him face to face. The third thing was that God would make the Princess Elizabeth, whom he was wont to mention by name, and even with tears, a comfort to the comfortless realm of England."

At last, at the end of September 1555, the Pope having issued a commission for a fresh trial of the two heretics, three bishops, delegated by Cardinal Pole, came down, either to accept the recantations of Ridley and Latimer, or to confirm the former sentence and deliver them to death. This latter office they were speedily called on to discharge, for the two prisoners were not men to flinch from the flames. They were condemned, degraded, and on Wednesday, 16th October, led forth to die.

It was a sunny autumn morning when Ridley and Latimer reached the place of execution on the north side of Oxford, over against Balliol College. First came Ridley in his black-furred gown and velvet cap, walking between the Mayor and an alderman. After him came Latimer, making what speed he could, "in a poor Bristol frieze gown, all worn, with his buttoned cap and a kerchief on his head all ready to the fire." Below his gown, and reaching down to his feet, the old man wore a long new shroud. Ridley ran to him and embraced him, saying: "Be of good heart, brother, for God will either assuage the fury of the flame or else strengthen us to abide it." Then they kneeled down both of them, and prayed very earnestly. After that they arose, and the one talked with the other a little while, till they which were appointed to see the execution removed themselves out of the sun. "But what they two said," adds Foxe, "I can learn of no man."

After listening to a brief and foolish sermon from a Dr. Smith, an apostate from Protestantism, they were commanded to make ready. Ridley gave away his apparel, a new groat, some nutmegs, races of ginger, his watch, and such things as he had about him, the bystanders but too happy to get "any rag of him." Latimer, who had left it to his keeper to strip him, now stood in his shroud bolt upright, "and whereas in his clothes he had seemed a withered and decrepit old man, he now stood by the stake as comely a father as one might lightly behold."

At last the fire was brought. Then prayed Ridley:

"O Heavenly Father, I give unto Thee most humble thanks, for that Thou hast called me to be a professor of Thee even unto death. Have mercy, O Lord, on this realm of England, and deliver the same from her enemies."

Latimer "lifted up his eyes with a most amiable and comfortable countenance, and said: 'God is faithful who suffereth us not to be tempted above that we are able.'" Then he added the memorable words: "Be of good comfort, Master Ridley, and play the man; we shall this day light such a candle, by God's grace, in England, as I trust shall never be put out."

Latimer died first. He received the flame as it were embracing it. After that he had stroked his face with his hands, and, as it were, bathed them a little in the fire, he soon died, as it appeared, with very little pain or none. "And thus," says Thomas Fuller quaintly, "though he came after Ridley to the stake, he got before him to heaven. His body, made tinder by age, was no sooner touched by the fire but instantly this old Simeon had his '*Nunc dimittis*,' and brought the news to heaven that his brother was following after."

But Ridley lingered and suffered far more pain, the fire about him being not well made. Yet in all his torment he forgot not to call upon God, still having in his mouth "Lord, have mercy upon me." His brother-in-law, who meant it in mercy, heaped upon him more fuel, which only kept down the fire. At last, some one pulling off the wood from above, made a way for the fire to escape. The red tongues of flame shot up fiercely, Ridley wrested himself into the midst of them, when the gunpowder with which he was furnished did its work. He stirred no more, falling down dead at Latimer's feet.

"And so we leave them going up to heaven, like Elijah, in a chariot of fire."

JOHN HOOPER

(1495–1555)

By
Charles Marson, M.A.

On 16th May 1549, two years after the accession of Edward VI. to the English throne, a tall grave English gentleman, some fifty-four years old, not dressed as an ecclesiastic, but with the appearance of one—accompanied by his wife, a noble lady of Burgundy, and a little daughter barely two years old—disembarked at the port of London from Antwerp. He had left Zurich, his happy home for the past two years, because he felt it his bounden duty to give his aid to the work of the Protestant Reformation in his own country, which was slowly making its way in the face of immense difficulties, and sorely needed such men as himself.

It was with no light heart he had abandoned his peaceful life in the bright pleasant Swiss city, and the loving Christian friends he had made there—Henry Bullinger, Gualter, Gesner, Pellican, and many more. He knew full well the trials that awaited him, and foreboded how they were sure to end. Foxe tells us that just before his departure from Zurich, when his friends clustered round to say "Farewell," telling him he was sure to rise to distinction in his native land, begging for a letter now and then, he told them in reply that had it not been for his conscience moving him for religion's sake to leave them, he would gladly have continued all his life in Zurich, and that nothing should ever induce him to forget such friends and benefactors; "and therefore," he added, "you shall be sure from time to time to hear from me, and I will write unto you how it goeth with me." Then taking the cathedral preacher, Henry Bullinger, his dearest friend at Zurich, by the hand, he uttered the following memorable words: "But the last news of all, I shall not be able to write myself, for there—where I take most pains—ye shall hear of me to be burnt to ashes! And that shall be the last news, which I shall not be able myself to write unto you, but you shall hear it of me."

In less than six years from the day these words were spoken, John Hooper, soon to be Bishop of Gloucester and Worcester—for he it was who uttered this prediction—was burnt to ashes at the stake, in the city of Gloucester, over against his own cathedral close, for the faith of Christ and the truth of His Gospel.

The early history of this great Reformer, "one of the wisest and best," says Richard Baxter, "of all our English bishops," is wrapped in much obscurity. That he was a Somersetshire man is certain, and that he was born in 1495, in the reign of Henry VII., some ten years after Bishop Latimer; but the place of his birth is unknown, and not even a tradition has survived about it. He was the only son and heir of a gentleman possessing considerable wealth. At the age of nineteen, in 1514, he was entered at Merton College, Oxford, under the tuition of his uncle, then Fellow of the College, and in 1518 he proceeded to the degree of B.A., when three-and-twenty years old.

These were the days just before the outburst of the Continental Reformation—days of great literary activity and of a dawning spiritual life. At home, Wolsey and Warham, Erasmus, Colet, and More were at work, and men were talking of the *Utopia*, and the *Praise of Folly*, and *The Paraphrase of the New Testament.* Abroad, the monk Martin Luther was protesting against Papal indulgences, and beginning the great war with the Church and Court of Rome, which was soon to shake the world. Both at Oxford and Cambridge there were those who before long would come to the front, but who were rather training for the conflict than actually engaged in it. At Oxford, a certain William Tindale of Magdalen Hall was "increasing more and more in learning and proceeding in degrees of the schools, reading also privily, with certain students and Fellows, the Holy Scriptures." At Cambridge, Bilney and Stafford were studying and lecturing on Scripture: Thomas Cranmer, Fellow of Jesus College, beginning the study of it; Hugh Latimer, Fellow of Clare Hall, violently opposing it.

Whether the mind of our young student at Merton College was in any way influenced by the coming changes we know not. All that has as yet been discovered about him is, that soon after taking his degree in 1518 he became a monk, first of the Cistercian Monastery of Old Clive (or Cleeve), near Watchet, in his own county of Somerset, and afterwards (as some think—though this is doubtful) of a monastery of Black Friars, in the city of Gloucester.

For the next twenty-one years we are left almost entirely in the dark about Hooper; a few scattered gleams of light, mostly from tradition, are all that at present are afforded us. From these we gather that, wearied and disgusted with a monastic life, he abandoned his habit, and came up again to Oxford to pursue his studies; but when is uncertain—possibly about 1536, at the age of forty or forty-one. Here, "having abundantly profited," says Foxe, "by the study of the sciences, through God's secret vocation he was stirred with fervent desire to the love and knowledge of the Scriptures. In the reading and searching whereof, as there lacked in him no diligence joined with earnest prayer, so neither wanted unto him the grace of the Holy Ghost to satisfy his desire and to open unto him the light of true Divinity."

Oxford was a very different place from what it had been when Hooper left it in 1518. "The old order," during the intervening years, "had changed," indeed, both abroad and at home. The Pope's jurisdiction had been abolished in England and transferred to King Henry VIII., who assumed the title of Supreme Head on Earth of the Church of England. The Scriptures were translated and circulated, the monasteries dissolved, the universities visited by Commission and reformed. "The learning of the wholesome doctrine of Almighty God, and the three tongues, Latin, Greek, and Hebrew, which be requisite for the understanding of Scripture, were specially enjoined, while the old scholastic text-books became waste paper and were treated as such."

But it would be a mistake to suppose that such improvements made any difference, for the time, in the creed of the Church of England, or in the prospects of real reform. Henry VIII. was trying to constitute an English Church, differing from the former Roman one on the point of the Supremacy, and on that alone. To accomplish this, he bade defiance equally to Lutherans, Protestants, and Papists. Heresy was a crime against the King and the law, and Henry's views on religion the only tolerated creed. After various alternations and oscillations in the Royal mind, partly religious but mainly political, in 1539 he caused the famous "Bill of Six Articles" to be passed—"The bloody statute," "The whip of six strings" (so called),—which established Transubstantiation by law, forbade Communion in both kinds, and the marriage of the clergy; made vows of celibacy obligatory, and upheld private masses for souls in purgatory, and the expediency and necessity of auricular confession. Burning, hanging, and forfeiture of lands and goods were the penalties for disobedience, and they speedily and widely began to take effect throughout the country.

This was a heavy blow and sore discouragement to the rising Protestant party, and for a time the results were disastrous enough. "In a fortnight," says Mr. Froude, "500 persons were indicted in London alone." There was not a man of note or reputation in the city but was under suspicion or actual arrest, if he had but spoken so much as a word against Rome. Latimer and Shaxton were imprisoned and driven to resign their bishoprics, and the University authorities were not sparing in detecting and denouncing offenders. Hooper, at this time forty-five years old, and "showing," as Foxe says, "some sparkles of his fervent spirit, fell eftsoon into displeasure and hatred of certain Rabbins at Oxford, who by and by began to stir the coals against him. Whereby, and especially by the procurement of Dr. Richard Smith of Oriel, the Reader in Divinity, he was compelled to void the University."

On leaving Oxford, Hooper became steward and chaplain in the household of Sir Thomas Arundel, a great man at the Court of King Henry. This must have been the period referred to by himself afterwards, where he says, "I was a courtier and living too much of a Court life in the palace of the King." But here the writings of the Swiss Reformers, Zwingli and Henry Bullinger, came into his hands, and "perceiving them," as he says, "seriously to affect the eternal salvation and happiness of my soul, I thought it well worth my while, night and day, with earnest study and an almost superstitious diligence, to devote my entire attention to them. And being at length delivered from idolatry and impious worship by the goodness of God, for which I am solely indebted to Him and to yourselves, nothing now remains for me to the end of my life but to worship God with a pure heart and know my own defects while living in this body; to serve my godly brethren *in* Christ and the ungodly *for* Christ; for I think no Christian ought to live to himself, but whatever he has or is, he ought to refer to God as the Author, and regard all that he possesses as common to all, according to the necessities and requirements of his brethren. I am indeed ashamed beyond measure that I have not done this heretofore, but it is better to be wise late than not at all."

Such sentiments soon got Hooper into trouble. Sir Thomas Arundel, a great friend of Bishop Gardiner and subsequently a persecutor of the Reformers, liked Hooper personally, but very much disliked his new opinions. To cure him, as he thought, he sent him to the Bishop with a private letter, requesting Gardiner " by conference of learning to do some good upon him, but in any case requiring him to send his chaplain home to him again." The Bishop, after four or five days' conference, " perceiving that he could neither do Hooper that good which he thought to do to him, nor that he would take any good at his hand, sent him home, right well commending his learning and wit, but yet bearing in his heart a grudging stomach against Master Hooper still."

The connection between Hooper and Sir Thomas Arundel did not last long after this. A secret warning was sent him that his life was in danger, for mischief was working against him. He accordingly, " borrowing a horse of a certain friend (whose life he had saved a little before from the gallows), took his journey to the sea-side to go to France." After a short stay in Paris, he returned to England, and was sheltered for a while in the house of Sir William St. Loe, Captain of the Guard and one of the Princess Elizabeth's gentlemen. But being again " molested and laid for," he was compelled, under the pretence of being captain of a ship going to Ireland, to take the seas, and so escaped (not without extreme peril of drowning) again to France, and thence to Germany. For at least nine years after this he lived abroad, with the exception of occasional secret visits to his own country as necessity compelled him, incurring the greatest dangers. " I suffered," he says, " many things by land: twice I suffered bonds and imprisonment, whence being marvellously delivered by the mercy of God, though with the heavy loss of my fortune, I was wretchedly harassed by sea both by enemies and storms." During this period, besides the glimpses we get of him in Paris and other parts of France, we hear of him at Strasburg, at Basel, and finally at Zurich, where he remained two years. Notwithstanding these harassing circumstances, he appears to have diligently pursued his studies, especially in Hebrew. He also formed valuable and lasting friendships with the chief Continental Reformers—Bucer, Martyr, Bullinger, and others—and above all, became thoroughly established and settled in the true faith of the Gospel of Christ.

In 1546, at the mature age of fifty, he married Anna de Tserclas, " a godly and wise woman," whose parents, of noble rank, lived not far from Antwerp. By his marriage with her he had issue one daughter, born at Zurich, and afterwards in England one son;

both of whom survived him. He took his wife with him to Zurich, where from 1547 to 1549, the first two years of Edward VI.'s reign, he lived, watching from afar the tide of events in England, and publishing such works as might help to further the cause of Protestantism: notably, *An Answer to Bishop Gardiner's Book upon the Eucharist*, and a work entitled *The Declaration of Christ and His Office*, dedicated to the Duke of Somerset, the Lord Protector, whose wife was half-sister to Sir Thomas Arundel.

Up to this time Hooper seems to have intended, as he says, "to bid farewell to the honours, pleasures, and friends of this world," and to abide all the rest of his days with his Christian brethren at Zurich. But the pressing need of help to the cause of Reformation in England, by his presence and personal labours, outweighed his first intention. Accordingly he left Zurich 24th March 1549, with his wife and little daughter Rachel, and after a tedious journey and many detentions, arrived in London 16th May, and at once threw himself heartily into the great work of preaching the Gospel to his fellow-countrymen.

Never was such a man more greatly needed than at this particular time for the cause of Jesus Christ. The English Reformation, we must remember, was of later growth than that of other countries, and was for years kept back by the strong hand of King Henry VIII. After his death, and at the beginning of the short and glorious reign of young Edward VI., the great reaction against Popery set in with resistless force; but, as in other countries, it took two forms: the one irreligious, including all varieties of unbelief, down to atheism; the other religious and evangelical, equally antagonistic to Romanism and infidelity. There was a mere political and secular Protestantism, and an evangelical and spiritual Protestantism, both to some extent working together, but both (except in opposition to Popery) wide asunder as to their end and the means to obtain it.

It was the work of Hooper and men of his spirit not merely to protest against and uproot superstition, but to sow the seeds and cherish the growth of Scriptural piety and holiness. Their main duty they rightly judged to be the leavening of the minds of their countrymen with the doctrine of the Gospel by the bold, simple, and faithful preaching of the Word of God. Hitherto the advance of the leaders of the great movement, Cranmer and others, had, with few exceptions, been slow, cautious, even timid. On the subject of the mass, especially—that great stumbling-block in the way of Scriptural truth—Archbishop Cranmer had, till very lately, held Roman doctrine, then gradually felt his way into Lutheranism, and only after some years embraced the doctrine expressed in the articles of the English Church. Edward's first Prayer Book, published in 1549, the year of Hooper's arrival, indicated the rate of present attainment. Acceptance of the new Communion office with Eucharistic vestments was possible even to believers in Transubstantiation; the minister was still uniformly styled a priest, the table of the Lord an altar, and prayers for the dead were retained in the Burial Service and in the prayer for the Church militant. All this was very distasteful, defective, and even "impious" to Hooper, accustomed to the more advanced teaching of the Swiss Reformers, and it is by comparing Edward's second Prayer Book of 1552 with this first one of 1549 that we can form a just idea of the powerful influence of Hooper and his friends on the religion of England during the three years intervening.

This influence Hooper speedily acquired in England by his bold, sound, Scriptural preaching, his unwearied labours, and the unmistakable consistency and holiness of his life. The Protector Somerset very soon made him his chaplain, and he employed to the utmost the means of usefulness such a position gave him.

A man of this mould and stamp was rightly esteemed the fittest for a bishop in Edward VI.'s days. Within a year of his landing in England, the predictions of his friends in Zurich were fulfilled. After preaching a course of Lent Sermons before the King, on the Book of Jonah, which deepened the impression already made on the Court by former sermons, he was offered the vacant bishopric of Gloucester.

This, however, Hooper at first refused to accept. To use his own words in a letter to Bullinger: "On many accounts I declined the office: both by reason of the shameful and impious form of the oath by the saints, which all who undertake the function of a bishop are compelled to put up with, and also on account of those Aaronic habits" (the vestments of the Popish bishops) "which they still retain, and are used to wear, not only at the administration of the sacraments but also at public prayers. When my refusal came to the King's ears, he wished to know the reason of my declining to serve God in so pious and holy a calling, and on Ascension Day last I was summoned before the whole Council to state my reasons, that it might be seen whether I could justly and lawfully refuse the Royal favour. The matter was seriously agitated. At last, for the glory of God, the discussion ended to the satisfaction of myself and that of all godly persons, not through my instrumentality alone, but by the grace of God and the favourable inclinations of the Council and their love for God and the purity and comeliness of the rising Church. The result is such as to set me clear from all defilement of superstition and from the imposition of the oath. On these terms I took upon myself the charge committed to me. Aid wretched me by your prayers, that I may diligently and truly seek the glory of God, lest that little flock should perish for which Christ died."

The matter, however, was not so soon settled as Hooper had supposed. The oath by the saints, indeed, was speedily dispensed with, the young King with his own hand indignantly erasing it; but the question of the vestments stirred a most unhappy controversy among the leaders of the Protestant party, and delayed Hooper's consecration for nearly a year. Cranmer and Ridley urged that garments and ceremonies were matters of indifference, and if required by the law, should be used for order and obedience' sake. Hooper, supported by John Alasco and others, maintained, on the other hand, that these things recalled the priesthood of Aaron and the Gentiles, and as inventions of the Papal Antichrist should be eschewed with all his other devices.

For months the contention between the two parties lasted, neither Ridley, Bishop of London, the chief disputant, nor Hooper yielding one jot or tittle of their opinions. Ridley went so far at last as to charge Hooper before the Council with insubordination, "impugning his doctrine and loading him with the greatest insults"; while Hooper privately and publicly, in "unseasonable and too bitter sermons," inveighed against the vestments and their upholders as "ungodly and impious and contrary to Holy Scripture."

At length the Council, weary of the whole dispute, silenced Hooper's preaching and committed him to the custody of Archbishop Cranmer, "to be either reformed or further punished, as the obstinacy of his case required." The Archbishop, after a fortnight's attempt at persuasion, finding, as he said, "Hooper coveting rather to prescribe order to others than to obey," reported to the Council, who committed him to the Fleet Prison, where he lay for nearly three weeks.

In the end a compromise was effected. Hooper gave way on some points for peace' sake, for Christian liberty, and the edification of the Church. He consented to wear the prescribed episcopal dress at his consecration and when he preached before the King, or in his cathedral, or on any great public occasion, while left at other times to do as he pleased. His submission made to the Council on these terms, he was released from prison, to the great joy of his friends, and so the dispute which had so seriously disturbed the peace of the Church came to an end.

On 8th March 1551, shortly after his imprisonment, he was consecrated Bishop of Gloucester, and preached before the King, says quaint old Foxe, "in a long scarlet chimere down to the foot, and under that a white linen rochet that covered his shoulders. Upon his head he had a geometrical, *i.e.* a four-squared, cap, albeit that his head was round, the bystanders either approving or condemning his dress just as they were guided by their feelings. What cause of shame the strangeness hereof was that day to that good preacher, every man may easily judge."

That this unhappy difference was soon healed between the two good men chiefly concerned in it, and that Ridley even came to be afterwards of Hooper's mind, may be judged from that most touching letter of his to Hooper, when both prelates were in prison four years afterwards, in Queen Mary's days.

Bishop Hooper lost no time after his consecration in entering upon the duties of his office, but at once went down to Gloucestershire and commenced the arduous work of teaching and preaching throughout the diocese, and setting in order the things that were wanting.

So little did he spare himself that his poor wife became seriously alarmed about his health, and in a letter to Henry Bullinger, still extant, entreats him to admonish her husband to be more moderate in his labours. "He preaches four or at least three times every day, and I fear lest these over-abundant exertions should cause a premature decay." But nothing could divert him from the work he had undertaken. "You know," writes he, in one of his letters, "that we are born for our country and not for ourselves. Were it not so, I should not now be discharging the office of a bishop." Of all the bishops of that day none seems to have made such full proof of his episcopal ministry as Hooper. We need not wonder, therefore, that the Government in another year gave him the charge of the diocese of Worcester as well as the diocese of Gloucester.

The state of the Gloucestershire clergy was lamentable. Their ignorance, carelessness, immorality, and superstition loudly called for reformation. "Of all counties of England," says Fuller, "Gloucestershire was most pestered with monks. Hence the wicked topical proverb, deserving to be banished out of that county, being the profane child of superstition : 'As sure as God is in Gloucester,' as if so many religious houses had certainly fastened His gracious presence to that place." We need hardly say that the very reverse of this old proverb was the actual truth.

What was the depth and extent of the clerical ignorance of the diocese may be guessed by the answers made to Bishop Hooper's inquiries on his first appointment. Out of three hundred and eleven clergy of his diocese, one hundred and sixty-eight were unable to repeat the Ten Commandments; thirty-one of the one hundred and sixty-eight could not state in what part of the Scripture they were to be found; forty could not tell where the Lord's Prayer was written; and thirty-one of the forty were ignorant who was the Author of it.

To remedy this, Hooper issued injunctions, and appointed superintendents over small bodies of the clergy, whose duty was to see the injunctions carried out, and to report to him. Among these injunctions one was, that every parson, vicar, or curate should learn by heart a Book of the Bible and recite it either to him or his superintendent in Latin or English; to wit, the first quarter of the year, the Epistle to the Romans; the second quarter, the Book of Deuteronomy; the third, the Gospel of St. Matthew; and the fourth, the Book of Genesis. Another injunction required "such curates or ministers as have so small and soft a breast or voice that they cannot be heard in the lowest end of the church, to come forth out of their chancels, belfries, and rood-lofts into the body of the church, and there reverently and plainly set forth the most holy treasure of God's Word, that all the people may hear and understand."

Of the laity Hooper seems to have had better hope, though some of them gave him much trouble and annoyance. One especially, Sir Anthony Kingston, a man of rank in Gloucestershire, was cited to appear before him on a charge of adultery. He refused to appear at first, but at last came to the bishop's court, and was gravely and severely rebuked. The knight so far forgot himself as to give the bishop a blow on the cheek before all the people, and loaded him with abuse. Hooper was unmoved. He reported the whole case, as in duty bound, to the Privy Council, with the result that Sir Anthony was severely punished for his contumacy, fined £500, and handed over to the bishop to do public penance.

His two cathedrals of Gloucester and Worcester gave him a great deal of work in clearing them of the relics of Papal superstition, while the cathedral dignitaries were a constant drag upon the chariot wheels of Reformation. "Ah, Mr. Secretary," he writes to Cecil, "if there were but good men in our cathedral churches, God should then have much more honour than He hath now, the King's Majesty more obedience, and the poor people more knowledge. But the realm wanteth light in the very churches where of right it ought most to be."

Such were some of Bishop Hooper's trials and difficulties. How he carried himself under them and executed his office is best described in the words of old Foxe, who knew and loved him well:—

"So careful was Master Hooper in his cure, that he left neither pains untaken nor ways unsought, how to train up the flock of Christ in the true word of salvation, continually labouring in the same. . . . No father in his household, no gardener in his garden, nor husbandman in his vineyard, was more or better occupied than he in his diocese amongst his flock, going about his towns and villages in teaching and preaching to his people there.

"What time he had to spare from preaching he bestowed either in hearing public causes or else in private study, prayer, and visiting of schools. With his continual doctrine, he adjoined due and discreet correction, not so much severe to any as to them which for abundance of riches and wealthy state thought they might do what they listed. And doubtless he spared no kind of people, but was indifferent to all men as well rich as poor, to the great shame of no small number of men nowadays. Whereof many we do see so addicted to the pleasing of great and rich men, that in the meantime they have no regard to the weaker sort of poor people, whom Christ hath bought as dearly as the other."

It is interesting to notice what a strong impression Hooper's brief episcopate and martyrdom made upon the minds of both clergy and laity throughout the dioceses of Gloucester and Worcester. The seed scattered far and wide was not lost. When, some ten years after, Richard Cheney was appointed to these sees, he, being, as was supposed, a Lutheran and certainly a lover of ceremonial, found it impossible to reconcile the sentiments of his clergy with his own. Fretted by constant conflict, he became desirous to resign a charge of which indeed he was eventually deprived by the Archbishop, and to retire to a life of more privacy and peace.

The 6th of July 1553 was a dark day for England, when the young King Edward, having finished his short but saintly course, his sixteenth year not yet completed, commended his people to God in prayer, especially beseeching Him to defend his realm from Papistry; and then, as he sank back in the arms of Sir Henry Sidney, exclaimed, "I am faint; Lord have mercy on me, and receive my spirit!" and so departed.

To Hooper the loss was heavy indeed, for in the young King now dead he not only mourned "such a Prince as for his age the world hath never seen," but also one who had ever loved and honoured him as a friend and minister of Christ. Too well he knew besides that from Queen Mary and her advisers he could expect no mercy. The Queen would regard him as "the greatest heretic in England," while Gardiner and Bonner, with whom he had before come into collision, and who personally hated him, would be certain to compass his ruin. Nevertheless, with his wonted loyalty to the Crown, he warmly supported Mary's claim to the vacant throne, against the supporters of Lady Jane Grey, and, as he says, "when her cause was at the worst, I rode myself from place to place (as is well known), to win and stay the people for her party. And to help her as much as I could, I sent horses out of both Gloucestershire and Worcestershire, to serve her in her great danger."

All this, however, went for nothing ; for Hooper was a marked man. His bishopric of Worcester was at once taken from him, and the Romanist Heath reinstated. Not two months after Edward's death Hooper was summoned to appear before the Lords of the Council at Richmond. This was to meet a pretended charge of being indebted to the Queen ; the real reason was to keep him safe in ward till a law should be passed giving power to bring him to the stake for heresy. His friends warned him of the impending danger, and besought him to flee the country ; but he calmly refused, saying, "Once I did flee and take me to my feet. But now, because I am called to this place and vocation, I am thoroughly persuaded to tarry, and to live and die with my sheep."

Accordingly he appeared at Richmond on 29th August, and was received by Gardiner, as Foxe tells us, "very opprobriously, who, railing and ranting of him, accused him on the score of his religion." No answer, of course, was of any avail. He was committed on the 1st September to the Fleet Prison, and there kept in close confinement. On 19th March 1554, some six months afterwards, he was taken before the Queen's Commissioners to be deprived of his bishopric of Gloucester. These were Bishops Gardiner of Winchester, Bonner of London, Tunstal of Durham, Day of Chichester, and Kitchin of Llandaff.

"So uncharitably was Master Hooper handled at these men's hands," says an impartial witness, "and so humbly and patiently did he use himself towards them, that whereas I stood in a mammering and doubt which of these two religions to have credited, their unreverend behaviour doth make me rather to credit his doctrine than that which they by railing and cruel words defended, considering that Christ was so handled before." Hooper refused to put away his wife, for which Bishop Day called him "hypocrite," and Tunstal and others "beast,' "with clamours and cries and long brutish talk." In answer to Bishop Tunstal, he plainly said that "he believed not the corporal presence in the Sacrament." Whereupon with noise and tumult they bade the notaries write that he was married and refused to give up his wife, and that he believed not the corporal presence, and was therefore worthy to be deprived of his bishopric, and so committed him again to prison, where he lay for eleven months longer—seventeen months in all—till 9th February 1555. On that day at last death gave him liberty, and the noble Protestant prisoner was free.

Of these long weary months we have occasional glimpses from the letters he was now and then able to send to friends at home and abroad. At an early period of his imprisonment he managed to get his wife and two children safely conveyed to Frankfort, where she took up her abode with a female relative, anxiously awaiting tidings of her husband's fate. He writes to his old friend Henry Bullinger, commending to his protection one and another of the fugitives from England for conscience' sake. He expresses devout resignation to the will of God, and exhorts his friends and fellow-sufferers to constancy and stedfast resolution. "As for myself," he writes in one of his letters, "in a short time, unless the Lord shall restrain the tyranny of our enemies, I shall go, in the blood of Christ, to heaven."

In one letter, written just at the close of his long imprisonment, we have an interesting account of the treatment he experienced in prison. At first, on payment of very heavy fees to the warden, he had been able to live in some degree of comfort, but after three months or thereabouts Gardiner ordered him to be confined in the common prisoners' wards, to be more severely dealt with. "I had nothing now appointed me," he says, "for my bed but a little pad of straw, a rotten covering with a tick and a few feathers therein, the chamber being vile and stinking, until by God's means good people sent me bedding to lie on. On the one side of this prison is the sink and filth of all the house, and on the other side the town ditch, so that the stench of the house hath infected me with sundry diseases. During which time I have been sick, and the doors, bars, hasps, and chains being made fast upon me, I have mourned, called, and cried for help. But the warden when he hath known me many times ready to die, and when the poor men of the wards have called to him to help me, hath commanded the doors be kept fast and charged that none of his men should come at me, saying, 'Let him alone: it were a good riddance of him.' Thus I have suffered imprisonment almost eighteen months, my goods, living, friends, and comfort taken from me: the Queen owing me by just account fourscore pounds or more. She hath put me in prison and giveth nothing to find me: neither is any one suffered to come at me whereby I might have relief.

. . . But I commit my just cause to God, whose will be done whether it be by life or by death."

At last the end came. Hooper and Rogers, Prebendary of St. Paul's, were brought up together out of their prison, on 24th January 1555, to St. Mary Overy's Church, Southwark, and were there required by Gardiner, Bonner, Tunstal, and three other prelates to make their submission to the Pope, as head of the Catholic Church. They attempted to argue, but were told that when Parliament had determined a thing, private men were not to call it in question: and they were allowed twenty-four hours to make up their minds. As they were leaving the church, Hooper was heard to say, "Come, brother Rogers, must we two take this matter first in hand and begin to fry these faggots?" "Yes, sir," said Master Rogers, "by God's grace." "Doubt not," said Master Hooper, "that God will give strength."

They were remanded to prison, and the next morning the "Queen's mercy" was offered them if they would recant. They refused, were sentenced to die, and were committed to Newgate to await the Queen's pleasure.

On Monday, 4th February 1555, both prisoners were taken to Newgate chapel and formally degraded from their ministerial office by Bishop Bonner, and handed over to the mercies of the secular power. They supposed that they were to suffer together, and Rogers had assured Hooper "that there was never little fellow better would stick to a man than he would stick to him"; but it was otherwise ordered. Rogers was led out to Smithfield at once to be burnt alone, the first to suffer of the noble army of Protestant Martyrs. Hooper was kept in his cell till the evening, and was then told, to his great joy, that he was to be sent to Gloucester, to be publicly burned in his own cathedral city, which had been infected with his pernicious doctrines.

Early, then, in the dark February morning of the next day, he began his last journey to Gloucester on horseback, attended by six guards. He leaped cheerfully on to his horse, without any help, having a hood upon his head, under his hat, that he should not be known. "And so he took his journey joyfully; and always by the way the guard learned of him where he was accustomed to bait or lodge, and ever carried him to another inn."

At Gloucester he was lodged not in the Northgate prison, as the sheriffs wished, but in Robert Ingram's house, opposite St. Nicholas' Church, through the earnest intercession of his guard, who reported "how quietly, mildly, and patiently he had behaved himself in the way, and that any child might keep him well enough." That night "he did eat his meat quietly, and slept his first sleep soundly." After this sleep he continued all the night in prayer until the morning; and then, as a day was allowed him for preparation, he desired that he might go into the next chamber, that there being solitary he might pray and talk with God. So that all that day, saving a little at meals, or when visitors came to him, he bestowed in prayer.

One of these visitors was Sir Anthony Kingston, whom he had once offended by publicly rebuking his sins. He entered unannounced and found him at his prayers, and as soon as he saw Master Hooper, he burst forth in tears. Hooper at the first blush knew him not, but when he said, "My lord, do you not know me—an old friend of yours, Anthony Kingston?" at once recognised him. Then Kingston said, "I am sorry to see you in this case, for, as I understand, you be come hither to die. Oh, consider! Life is sweet, and death is bitter. Therefore, seeing life may be had, desire to live, for life hereafter may do good."

Hooper answered, "I thank you for your counsel, but it is not so friendly as I could have wished. True it is, Master Kingston, that death is bitter, and life is sweet; but consider that the death to come is more bitter, and the life to come is more sweet. Therefore have I settled myself, through the strength of God's Holy Spirit, patiently to pass through this fire prepared for me, desiring you and others to commend me to God's mercy in your prayers."

"Well, my lord," said Kingston, "then there is no remedy, and I will take my leave; and I thank God that ever I knew you, for God did appoint you to call me, being a lost child. I was both an adulterer and a fornicator, but God, by your ministry, hath brought me to the detesting and forsaking of the same." They parted, the tears on both their faces.

In the evening came the Mayor and aldermen, with the sheriffs, to shake hands with him. To them he spoke cheerfully enough. "It was a sign of their good will," he said, "to take a condemned man and prisoner by the hand, and a proof that they had not forgotten the things he used to teach them as their bishop and pastor." He begged the sheriffs that there might be a quick fire, to make an end shortly, and for himself, he would be as obedient as they could wish. "If you think I do amiss in anything," said he, "hold up your fingers, and I am done; for I am not come hither as one enforced or compelled to die (for it is well known I might have had my life with worldly gain), but as one willing to offer and give my life for the faith rather than consent to the wicked Papistical religion of the Bishop of Rome, and I trust by God's grace to-morrow to die a faithful servant of God, and a true obedient subject to the Queen."

He retired to rest that night very early, saying that he had many things to remember. He slept one sleep soundly, and bestowed the rest of the night in prayer. After he had risen in the morning, he desired that no man should be suffered to come into the chamber, that he might be solitary till the hour of execution.

About nine o'clock on the Saturday morning, 9th February 1555, Hooper was told to prepare to be led forth, as the time was at hand, and he came down from his chamber, accompanied by the two sheriffs. The day was gloomy, wet, and windy. The place of the execution was an open space outside the college precincts, near a large elm-tree, under which he had been wont to preach, near the west end of the cathedral. Several thousands of people were collected to see him suffer; some had climbed the tree and were seated among the leafless branches, in the storm and rain. A company of priests were in a room over the college gate.

"Alas!" said Hooper, "why be these people assembled and come together? Peradventure they think to hear something of me now, as in times past; but speech is prohibited me." He had suffered much in prison from sciatica, and was lame, but he limped cheerfully alone with his staff in his hand, and smiled at such as he knew among the people.

Arrived at the stake, he kneeled him down to pray; but ere he was entered into his prayer, a box was brought and placed on a stool before his eyes, which he was told contained his pardon if he would recant. But Hooper cried out, "If you love my soul, away with it! If you love my soul, away with it!"

The box being taken away, Lord Chandos said, "Despatch him then, seeing there is no remedy." Yet he was suffered to pray a while longer, and certain of them who were standing nigh heard how he confessed his faith; acknowledged his sinfulness; asserted his innocence; and in these words implored the Divine help to bear his cross: "Well seest Thou, my Lord and God, what terrible pains and cruel torments be prepared for Thy creature; such, Lord, as without Thy strength none is able to bear or patiently to pass. But all things that are impossible with man are possible with Thee. Therefore strengthen me of Thy goodness, that in the fire I break not the rules of patience, or else assuage the terror of the pains, as shall seem most to Thy glory."

Prayer being done, he prepared himself for the fire, stripping off his garments to his shirt, and was bound round the waist with a hoop of iron to the stake. A pound of gunpowder was tied between his legs, and as much more under either arm. When the faggots and reeds were brought, he received two bundles of them in his own hands, embraced them, kissed them, put under either arm one of them, and showed with his hand how the rest should be disposed, pointing to the place where any did lack.

The man that was appointed to make the fire here approached and begged his forgiveness for it. "Therein," said Master Hooper, "thou dost nothing offend me. God forgive thee thy sins, and do thine office, I pray thee."

Thus being ready, he looked upon the people, of whom he might well be seen (for he was both tall and stood upon a high stool), and round about him, and in every corner there was nothing to be seen but weeping and sorrowful faces. Then lifting up his eyes to heaven, he prayed in silence. The fire was then brought, but the wood was green. The dry rushes only kindled, and burning for a few moments were blown away by the wind, so that he was not more than touched by the fire.

Within a space after, a few dry faggots were brought, and a new fire kindled with the faggots (for there were no more reeds), and this burned at his nether parts, but had small power above, because of the wind, saving that it did burn his hair and scorch his skin a little. In the time of which fire he prayed, saying mildly: "O Jesus, the Son of David, have mercy upon me, and receive my soul." After the second fire was spent, he did wipe both his eyes, and beholding the people, he said with an indifferent loud voice, "For God's love, good people, let me have more fire."

A third fire was kindled within a while after, which was more extreme than the other two; and then the bladders of gunpowder exploded, but did him small good: they were so ill placed, and the wind had such power. In the which fire he prayed with somewhat a loud voice, "Lord Jesus, have mercy upon me! Lord Jesus, receive my spirit!" These were his last words.

"Thus was he three-quarters of an hour or more in the fire, and quietly and patiently died; and he now reigneth, I doubt not, as a blessed martyr in the joys of heaven prepared for the faithful in Christ before the foundations of the world, for whose constancy all Christians are bound to praise God."

JOHN KNOX

(1505–1572)

By
A. Taylor Innes, M.A.

John Knox, whom his contemporaries called the Apostle of the Scots, was born near Haddington, in East Lothian, in 1505. Like so many Scotch youths since his day, he learned Latin at the grammar school of his county town, and in his sixteenth year went to college. Edinburgh was near, but its college was not yet founded, and Knox's father, though apparently a man in humble life, was related to the lairds of Knock, in Renfrewshire. So the lad went westwards to Glasgow University, beside what were then the green banks of the Clyde.

There he found himself along with George Buchanan and other youths of genius, in the class of John Major, and in contact with the great questions of the age. For Major had in his early years been Professor in the University of Paris, and that university had been long the chief representative of liberal principles in Europe. So while the young Scotchmen ranged through scholastic theology and philosophy, under the lights of Aristotle and Aquinas, their "regent" also told them how those principles had been applied in the continental struggle of the last two centuries against absolute power. He taught that the Church was greater than its Pope, and

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the people greater than their king; and that both potentates, when they oppressed the Christian people, could be controlled, and if need be deposed. But Major, like his contemporaries, made no attempt to escape from the accumulation of sacerdotal doctrines which popes and kings and universities alike upheld. Knox perhaps became himself a regent or university teacher, and is said to have been famous as a trainer in logic, first in Glasgow and then in St. Andrews.

But by this time a greater wave of thought and feeling had passed over Europe, and was beating on the Northern shores. The Scottish Parliament in 1525 found it necessary to prohibit the introduction of the works of Luther into a country hitherto "clean of all such filth and vice." The Scottish clergy, a body worldly as well as wealthy and powerful, watched against every symptom of change. It was in vain. A cousin of King James, named Hamilton, went himself to Wittenberg, and on his return confessed everywhere that he had found the long-buried truth of God. Cardinal Beatoun had him seized and burned before the old college of St. Andrews. But "the smoke of Patrick Hamilton infected all on whom it blew," and the blood of martyr after martyr in every county of Scotland became the seed of the unborn Scottish Church.

In the very midst of such scenes the young priest (for Knox had received orders from the existing hierarchy) slowly made up his mind. Less and less he taught the forms of logic; more and more the substance of theology. Jerome and Augustine led him back to apostles and evangelists, and in the Gospel of John and the Epistle to the Ephesians, as he said long after on his death-bed, he "cast his first anchor."

When Knox cast anchor in the "Evangel," a storm was raging around. For the last twelve years of James V.'s reign, from 1530 to 1542, all who professed to want nothing more than the ancient Gospel and God's promise in it were on that account alone counted heretics. Many were condemned ; some were burned alive. The Bible in the vulgar tongue was proscribed. Still, the number of those who read it in secret grew and increased ; and James was importuned to stamp out the plague by a proscription of the readers. His unexpected death prevented the massacre, and for a brief season the Regent Arran favoured the rising faith. Even the Scots Parliament passed an Act making it lawful to read the English Scriptures. Light spread rapidly through the land ; but it was presently overclouded. The Regent fell under the influence of Cardinal Beatoun. The child-queen, Mary of Scots, was married to the Dauphin of France. The persecuting laws were again set in operation. They had already driven Knox from the University of St. Andrews, and he was now in his native and rural East Lothian as tutor to a gentleman's two sons.

Hither came one of the most charming figures of that time of danger and hope—the learned, pious, and kindly preacher, George Wishart. Knox seems to have followed him much in various parts of Scotland. But now when Wishart, in danger not only of arrest but of assassination, came to Knox's own county, Knox attached himself closely to him, and constantly carried a sword before the preacher.

At last the day came when Wishart was to be arrested. Knox insisted on accompanying him to the neighbouring Ormiston. Wishart refused, and ordered the sword to be taken from the young enthusiast. "Go back to your bairns," he said ; "one is sufficient for a sacrifice." That night Wishart was laid in bonds, and soon, where the ruins of the grim castle of St. Andrews still frown over the sea, he perished in the flames, the cardinal looking on. Such acts of tyranny weakened the belief—never very strong in Scotland—in priestly immunity from punishment or revenge. When, soon after, a band of the younger gentlemen of Fifeshire, encouraged by England, stormed into his castle and slew the great archbishop within his own walls, Knox and many others openly rejoiced in it as an act of Divine retribution. But it was not by the sword that Scotland was to be reformed. On the contrary, the "slaughter of the cardinal" brought the cause of the new faith to its lowest ebb.

In a short time the fortress of St. Andrews was almost the only spot upon the soil where those who professed the Evangel were safe. At Easter 1547 Knox and his two pupils fled there for safety; and within the strong walls they found a remarkable congregation of distinguished men, many of whom (like Sir David Lindsay of the Mount, the sage and sarcastic poet so vividly described in Scott's *Marmion*) had nothing to do with the conspiracy against Beatoun.

It was here that the second crisis in Knox's personal history, scarcely less important than the "casting of his first anchor," occurred. It was his call to public life. For this man, now above forty years of age, had shrunk with extraordinary sensitiveness from putting himself forward in the Church, and even in this extremity of the little St. Andrews flock, refused to usurp the great pastoral office. They, however, had also laid their plans. John Rough, the preacher to the garrison, ascended the pulpit on Sunday, and turning to Knox, as the spokesman of the whole Christian congregation charged him in God's name to take upon him the public office of preaching the ancient Gospel, now again delivered to the world. "Was not this your charge to me?" he asked the audience. "And do ye not approve this vocation?" "It was! We do!" rang out from all sides of the assembly.

Knox stood up and attempted to speak, but the pent-up feelings of the strong man were too much for him. He burst into tears, and rushing out of the church, shut himself up in his chamber. There for days he wrestled with the question, whether this was indeed a call from God's Church in Scotland. For if so, the Gospel was no longer to be merely trusted in by him as a private man for his own salvation. It was to be preached by him to his countrymen at the hazard of his life, and maintained on behalf of the people of Scotland as God's great gift to them also for their salvation.

So it was with reluctant tears, and a deep feeling of unworthiness, that the most indomitable of the Reformers accepted, under constraint of conscience, the call to be a minister of God's Church. But Knox had only preached a few months in St. Andrews when the castle capitulated to the foreign fleet, and he and his companions were flung into the French galleys. There for nineteen weary months he toiled at the oar under the lash; and through the cold of two winters and the heat of the intervening summer had leisure to count the cost of the choice so recently made. His own choice alone would not have sustained him.

But Knox now believed that he had the call, and therefore the promise, of God for his public work as well as for his private life; and henceforth he never wavered. When the master of the galley *Notre Dame* insisted that the chained prisoner should kiss a carved image of the Virgin, whose name the vessel bore, he flung the intrusive "idol" into the Loire. "She is light enough, let her learn to swim!"

Again he bent to the oar, and after long days found himself, emaciated and enfeebled, off the coast of Fife. His fellow-captive, James Balfour, pointed out to him, in the dim distance, the steeple of St. Andrews, rising from the church in which, a fortnight after that scene of speechless emotion, he had risen to preach his first sermon. "Yes," Knox said, "I know it well; and I am fully persuaded, how weak soever I now appear, that I shall not depart this life till that my tongue shall glorify His godly Name in the same place." But years were to pass before that could be fulfilled—years of exile and of labour.

On being set free from his French bondage, he took refuge in England under Edward VI., and for two years preached in Berwick. Some of his most famous sermons, however, were delivered in St. Nicholas' Church in Newcastle, now the cathedral of the modern diocese. In 1551 the King made him one of his chaplains in ordinary. Next year the Scotch divine, now preaching in London, was offered the bishopric of Rochester. All preferment of this kind, however, he refused, having already made up his mind that bishops were not needed in the Christian commonwealth; and the chief thing he gained in England was—a wife. Marjory Bowes, the daughter of a gentleman of Northumberland, became betrothed to the Scotch preacher; but the marriage did not take place without her father's persistent opposition.

In 1554 he took his wife with him to Dieppe, and from thence went on to Geneva and visited Calvin. Later still he became pastor of the English Protestants in Frankfort-on-the-Main.

But in 1555 news came that the persecution in Scotland was slackening, and Knox first crossed to his wife's friends at Berwick, and then went on to

Edinburgh. From Edinburgh he went to Angus in the east and Ayrshire in the west of Scotland, and found men of all ranks, up to the highest, eager to hear. "The trumpet blew the old sound three days together. Oh, sweet were the death that should follow such forty days in Edinburgh as here I have had three!"

The time was not, however, ripe. Knox, at the suggestion of the Earls Marischall and Glencairn, had addressed Mary of Guise, then Queen-Regent, in behalf of the "Evangel," but she handed his pamphlet to the Archbishop of Glasgow with the words: "Please you, my Lord, to read a pasquil!"

He returned again abroad, and while he was tried and burned in effigy in Edinburgh, he took charge of the English congregation, first at Geneva and then at Dieppe. Here he issued his extravagant *Blast* against the "monstrous regiment (*i.e.* government) of women." Written during Mary's "regiment," it was published inopportunely just before the accession of Elizabeth, and deprived him for ever of the favour of that very feminine but very great ruler. A more important book was his *Appellation* to the Scottish nobility, some of the most powerful of whom were now putting themselves at the head of "the Congregation," then the usual word in Scotland for the Church or *ecclesia.* When great barons like Glencairn, Marischall, and Argyll partook the "fervent thirst" of a religious revival, in which thousands could be described as "night and day sobbing and groaning" for the water of life, the end was not far off. It was hastened rather than hindered by the burning, in 1558, of a blameless priest of the age of eighty-two. In January 1559 Knox left Geneva, and in May he landed for the last time on the shores of Scotland, whose hills from north to south were now everywhere tinged with the flush of the coming dawn.

It was dawn around; but a cloud hung overhead. On the day on which Knox landed in Edinburgh he found the preachers of the Kirk were to be tried for their lives the next week in Stirling. He had himself been condemned years before, and he was again proclaimed a rebel the moment he appeared.

But he did not hesitate for a moment. Joining his brethren, he offered to appear with them in Stirling, and the Queen-Regent, alarmed at the concourse of their adherents, promised that the trial should be put off. Acting, however, on her declared principle (transmitted afterwards to so many of her unfortunate house), that "it became not subjects to burden their princes with promises, further than they pleased to keep them," she broke her pledge and outlawed the accused.

The "Lords of the Congregation" of Scotland were not the men to abandon their friends in this extremity, and Knox, who was actually in the pulpit on the day when the news came to them at Perth, thundered tenfold against the image-worship so treacherously maintained. The same afternoon, and in the same church, a foolhardy priest commenced to say mass. The boys protested; the people shouted; the mob gathered and grew. In ten minutes the church was stripped of images and all other ornaments of ritual. But then the "rascal multitude," as Knox called them, fell with fire upon the monasteries of the town, including the splendid Charter House, and laid them in ruins. This violence soon raised the question whether this preaching of the Word was everywhere to be repressed with fire and sword. The Queen-Regent moved with her army against the Protestant Lords. They gathered their retainers, and having forced a truce, united themselves in what was called a "Godly Band," as the earliest Covenanters of Scotland.

Hitherto their worship had been private, and hidden from the law. Now, in June 1559, they resolved that the time had come to go farther. Knox, as usual, was their chosen mouthpiece, and St. Andrews was the spot chosen to begin the final struggle. To St. Andrews they gathered; but, when the day came, their hearts failed them. Armed forces lay all around, and the Archbishop wrote them that if their preacher dared to enter the pulpit, his hackbuts would open fire upon him. All quailed except the one man threatened. This was the goal to which for so many years he had looked forward, and having reached it, he was not now to turn aside. On 14th June he went once more into that pulpit and addressed the people of St. Andrews, and through them the people of Scotland, on their duty to profess the Gospel, notwithstanding all hindrance of idolatrous authority. The town instantly and enthusiastically responded, provost and bailies leading their fellow-burgesses. The flame spread. Town after town, burgh after burgh, city after city of Scotland became fastnesses of "The Religion." Knox was called as minister to Edinburgh; but he preached everywhere throughout Scotland. "The long thirst of my wretched heart," he confessed, "is satisfied in abundance."

The French auxiliary force, wielded by the Queen-Regent, endeavoured to suppress the new flame of national life. To meet this, Knox and the Congregation applied for aid to England; and Elizabeth, after infinite vacillation, consented. The Scottish Lords and Commons, however, were determined not to lose the government of their own country. Knox told the Congregation that, according to God's Word, a people might for just cause restrain their rulers; and the nobles, barons, and burgesses assembled in Edinburgh at once pronounced the suspension of the authority of the Queen-Regent until the calling of a free Parliament. Politically, the step seemed premature. The Regent pressed them with all her forces, and drove them defeated into Stirling. But there, in the extreme dejection and gloom of the Protestant Lords, a sermon from the indomitable preacher kindled hope once more.

And at last the tide turned. The English forces drove out the French. Mary of Guise, the kindly and queenly representative of the great Catholic power, died in Edinburgh Castle. Scotland, left to itself, was free. On 19th June 1560 "the Congregation" assembled in St. Giles's Church to return thanks for the peace, and on 1st August the free Parliament already anticipated—by far the most important Parliament which has ever sat in Scotland—met in the city of Edinburgh.

There, on 17th August 1560, was transacted a memorable scene. The barons and ministers "professing the Lord Jesus within the realm" had been desired to draw up, and present to the Parliament, a creed or confession of their Faith. It was the work to which earnest men all over Europe were now giving themselves. At any moment an individual or a community was summoned to declare, on the shortest notice, and at the deadliest risk, what they believed. Hitherto in Scotland the Reformers had been willing to say, in the words of their "gude and godly ballad," that "The New Testament is our Faith." Now for the first time they were called upon by public authority to utter that Faith in the form of their personal *Credo*.

"In four days," says Knox, who was undoubtedly its chief draftsman, they presented to Parliament the

"Scottish Confession," the creed of their nation for a century to come. It was "a great assembly," consisting chiefly of the lesser barons, but including men of all ranks and of all views in religion; and on grave faces from Highlands and Lowlands there rested the light of the greatest crisis which Scottish history has seen. Before this long-desired tribunal of his countrymen Knox and his colleagues now stood forth, and read aloud "the sum of that doctrine which we profess, and for the which we have sustained infamy and danger." These Scottish Articles of Religion, much fuller in detail than the English, were also more ardent and personal in their form; and as the words "we believe and confess" rang out again and again under the different heads—the Being of God, the revelation of His promise to fallen man, the Mediator and His death and passion for those chosen in Him to life, their faith and good works, and the Church, that "company and multitude of men chosen of God, who rightly worship and embrace him by faith in Christ Jesus"—the effect upon the audience was extraordinary.

Two men have preserved to us the record. Knox himself, in his most graphic *History*, tells how, "as our confession was publicly read," its authors "were present, standing upon their feet, ready to have answered," but the Romish bishops refused discussion, and the three temporal Lords who voted against it only gave as reason, "We will believe as our fathers believed."

Randolph, Queen Elizabeth's envoy, stood by, and tells how the other barons "concluded all in one that that was the Faith in which they ought to live and die." "Indeed," he writes two days later to Cecil, "I never heard matters of so great importance neither sooner despatched nor with better will agreed unto." The

Scots Lords spoke "with as glad a will as ever I heard men speak." "Divers, with protestation of their conscience and faith, desired rather presently to end their lives than ever to think contrary unto that allowed there. Many also offered to shed their blood in defence of the same." "The old Lord of Lindsay, as grave and goodly a man as ever I saw, said: 'I have lived many years; I am the oldest in this company of my sort; now that it hath pleased God to let me see this day, where so many nobles and others have allowed so worthy a work, I will say, with Simeon, *Nunc dimittis*.'" And in this spirit the Parliament accepted and adopted the Confession, and published it to the world.

It was the birthday of a nation. For not in that assembly alone, and within the dim walls of the old Parliament House of Edinburgh, was that Faith confessed and those vows made. Everywhere throughout Scotland the Scottish peasant and the Scottish burgess felt himself called to deal, individually and immediately, with God in Christ; and the contact, which for some was salvation, was for all ennobling and solemnising. The Scottish "common man" believed and confessed his belief, and "the vague, shoreless universe had become for him a firm city and dwelling which he knew. Such virtue was in belief; in these words well spoken: *I believe*."

So much had Knox since his fortieth year been already privileged to do for his country. He was now fifty-four years old, and a further great work was before him. But he was henceforth to be permanently a citizen and minister of Edinburgh, and we may pause at this point to look at the man and his surroundings. In person Knox was small and frail—"a corpuscle" of a man, his earliest biographer tells us. The only portrait of him which has any pretensions to be historical, sent in 1580 by his contemporary Beza from Geneva, suggests little of the "churlish nature" of which he sometimes accuses himself; and the sympathy and tenderness which abound in his letters are less reflected in it than his constancy and heroism.

His old house in the Nether Bow remains, with its quaint gables, peaks, and casements, very much as it was in 1560, when to it John Knox brought his first wife, Marjory Bowes, and her two sons. Before the end of that year she died, leaving no record except Calvin's epithet of *suavissima.* Three years passed, and he was seen riding home with a second wife, "not like ane prophet or auld decrepit priest as he was," says his Catholic adversaries, "but like as he had been one of the blood royal, with his bands of taffettie fastened with golden rings."

The lady for whom he put on this state was Margaret Stewart, the daughter of his friend Lord Ochiltree, and the same critics assure us, "by sorcery and witchcraft he did so allure that poor gentlewoman, that she could not live without him." In this house at least her three daughters were born, and from it at length his body was carried to the churchyard of St. Giles, to the grave over which Earl Morton, the newly-elected Regent, uttered the well-known sentence: "Here lieth a man who in his life never feared the face of man."

His want of fear was not because of the absence of danger. Only a year before a musket-ball, aimed at Knox's usual seat in this house, passed through his window and lodged in the roof. Yet this was but one late incident in the long struggle which he to the last shared with Scotland, and to trace which we must now return to A.D. 1560.

Ever since that year 1560 the Gospel, as the religion of the individual, has been free in Scotland. But the religion of the individual in that northern land leads up to and creates the religion of the community, and this great work yet remained. Hitherto this had only been done congregationally "in our towns and places reformed." Now for the first time the Reformers contemplated a "universal kirk" of Scotland. For his country, in Knox's view, was a free commonwealth, and entitled to organise its own religion. In order to procure this, they went at once to Parliament and the civil power. Scotland was yet strongly feudal, and Knox held that it was the magistrates' duty to maintain and purify religion. The legislature had already sanctioned the Reformed creed as true. He demanded now that it should sanction the organising of the Church, and make provision not only for it, but for education and the poor.

To this end a book of "Discipline," or organisation, memorable for its statesmanlike sagacity, was presented by the Church to the Council. Every householder was to instruct his own family, or to make sure that they were instructed, in the principles of the Christian religion. No one was to be allowed to remain in ignorance. To this end readers were appointed, by whom the whole Scriptures were to be publicly read through in the churches. The preaching of the Word, by ministers chosen by the congregation itself, or failing them, by the Church generally, was made the centre of the whole system. A day was to be appointed every week in the great towns for Prophesying or Interpretation, by which was probably meant such a congregational discussion of questions relating to the doctrine of Scripture as has become common in Wales, while it has fallen out of use in Scotland.

In addition to the ministers having a fixed cure, ten or more superintendents were to be appointed, whose duty it was to travel from place to place in order to plant and erect churches and appoint ministers, where in the meantime they were not to be found. In all the churches to be thus brought into existence not only the Word and Sacraments, but also the discipline of the Church was to be carefully observed—*i.e.* those openly immoral and those who remained scandalously ignorant or heretical were to be excluded from its communion.

The patrimony of the Church was to be applied to maintain three classes, "to wit, the ministers of the Word, the poor, and the teachers of the youth." In the support of the ministry was included a provision for their wives and families. The poor were to be supported, as in the early days of Christianity, by the exertions of the deacons in each congregation. For education careful provision was made. Each church was to have its own school, and "grammar and the Latin tongue" were to be taught in every town. In every notable town there was to be a college, in which the arts" should be studied; and in three towns of Scotland "the great schools called Universities" were to be maintained according to a constitution carefully laid down.

It was the rough draft of a great deal which has already been realised in Scotland, and of much which still remains to be attained, through the double agency of church and school. But in the meantime it was proposed to the Council of the nobility. How their acceptance of the great scheme was for seven years refused or postponed need not be stated in detail. The great obstacle was the struggle with the Queen. to be presently noticed. But there were others besides.

Cautious politicians scoffed at the whole proposal as a "devout imagination." Selfish nobles refused to "bear the barrow to build the House of God," and so perhaps impoverish their own.

But the organisation which nobles and politicians and the civil legislature refused to sanction, the Church, being free, instantly took up as its own work. In December 1560 the first General Assembly sat, and down to 1567 it met twice a year "by the authority of the Church itself, and year by year laid the deep foundations of the social and religious future of Scotland." It was the work of organising a rude nation into a self-governing Church. Of this vast national burden it must ever be remembered that the chief weight lay on the shoulders of Knox, a mere pastor in Edinburgh. And during the same seven years this indomitable man was sustaining another doubtful conflict, in which the issues, not for Scotland only, but for Europe, were so momentous, that in order to trace it even the labour of organisation must be allowed in the meantime to fall into the background.

Mary Queen of Scots landed in her native kingdom on 19th August 1561. She became at once the star of all eyes, not only in Scotland, but throughout Europe. The widow of the heir of the throne of France, the reigning sovereign of Scotland, and the heiress presumptive of England, the young princess was already a personage whose destiny must decide the wavering balance of Christendom. England, nominally Protestant, was still largely, perhaps predominantly, Romanist; Scottish Protestantism was only a year old; and the Guises were confident that their brilliant daughter would ere long bring back the people of both to the faith. And with Scotland and England united under a Roman Catholic queen the whole north would easily be restored to the See of Rome.

Mary understood her high part and accepted it with alacrity. Fascinating and beautiful, keen-witted and strong-willed, she would have found herself at home in this great game of politics even if it had not for her one element of intense personal interest. For all men knew that the turning-point in the question would be her marriage, and that the chief prize of the game was the hand of Mary Stuart.

Knox, on his side, understood the situation equally well. Very shortly after her arrival he preached in the metropolitan church of St. Giles, and "inveighed against idolatry." Scarcely had the voice of the preacher died away when the Queen sent for him to Holyrood. Then ensued the first of those famous dialogues between Mary and Knox recorded for us by the Reformer's strong pen. He easily satisfied her as to his theoretical *Blast* against women.

"But yet," said she, "ye have taught the people to receive another religion than their princes can allow. And how can that doctrine be of God, seeing that God commands subjects to obey their princes?"

"Madam," said he, "as right religion took neither original, strength, nor authority from worldly princes, but from the eternal God alone, so are not subjects bound to frame their religion according to the appetites of their princes."

This, of course, led on to the doctrine of non-resistance.

"Think ye," quoth she, "that subjects, having power, may resist their princes?"

"If their princes exceed their bounds," quoth he, "and do against that wherefore they should be obeyed, it is no doubt but they may be resisted, even by power."

The Queen's logic, even as reported by her adversary, was almost faultless, and she never failed to come up to the next point of the argument. So she now raised the question what a prince's religion should be—

"Ye interpret the Scriptures," she said later on, "in one manner, and others interpret in another. Whom shall I believe? and who shall be judge?"

"Ye shall believe," said he, "God, that plainly speaketh in His Word; and farther than the Word teacheth you, ye neither shall believe the one nor the other. The Word of God is plain in itself; and if there appear any obscurity in one place, the Holy Ghost, which is never contrarious unto Himself, explains the same more clearly in other places."

Both parties to the argument sustained it with fairness as well as ability; but Knox seems to have conceived none of the hopes which others entertained as to his Royal pupil. He was right. Mary had no intention of considering the questions so zealously put before her. Next year, however, she went so far as to invite him to come and tell her privately when he thought anything was wrong in the Court, rather than preach on it. Knox absolutely declined, and invited her instead to come to the public preaching of God's Word. The resentful Queen turned her back on him; and as he went away, "with a reasonable merry countenance," he caught the whisper of one of the attendants, "He is not afraid!" He turned upon the whisperer. "Why should the pleasing face of a gentlewoman affray me? I have looked in the face of many angry *men*, and yet have not been affrayed above measure."

Another year passed, and though Mary's fascinations had shaken the firmness of some of the Protestant lords, the mass of the people remained constant. But a crisis was approaching. Each of the great Catholic states, France, Austria, and Spain, had projects for intermarriage with the Queen of Scotland, and Philip had now consented to press the claim of his eldest son, Don Carlos. It was when "in imagination Queen of Scotland, England, Ireland, Spain, Flanders, Naples, and the Indies," that Mary Stuart, in 1563, bent all her skill to induce her native kingdom at least to tolerate Catholicism, and so furnish the needful basis for the edifice which she and a Catholic husband might go on to build.

She began with Knox. Sending for him to Lochleven, she for two hours urged him not to let her people take *her* sword into their own hands, especially in matters of religion.

"The sword of justice is God's," said Knox, and now, as before, he firmly maintained the right of the commonwealth, when its prince failed to execute justice, to do so from its own resources.

Mary recognised that this one man she could bend neither by threat nor argument, and henceforward she did not attempt it. But she took another course.

Next morning the Queen sent for Knox as she was going out hawking. She had apparently forgotten all the keen dispute of the evening before; and her manner was caressing and confidential. What did Mr. Knox think of Lord Ruthven's offering her a ring? "I cannot love him," she added, "for I know him to use enchantment." Was Mr. Knox not going to Dumfries, to make the Bishop of Athens the superintendent of the Kirk in that county? He was, Knox answered; the proposed superintendent being a man in whom he had confidence. "If you knew him," said Mary, "as well as I do, ye would never promote him to that office, nor yet to any other within the Kirk." In yet another matter, and one more private and delicate, she required his help. Her half-sister, Lady Argyll, and the Earl, her husband, were, she was afraid, not on good terms. Knox had once reconciled them before, but, "do this much *for my sake*, as once again to put them at unity." And so she dismissed him with promises to enforce the laws against the Mass.

Knox for once fell under the spell. He seems to have believed that this most charming of women was at last leaning to the side of faith and freedom. And so he sat down and wrote a long letter to Argyll on his conjugal duty. He went to Dumfries, and on making inquiry he found that the Queen was right in her shrewd estimate of the proposed superintendent, and took means to prevent the election.

All this time he fully expected that the Parliament about to sit would enforce as well as ratify the yet unratified laws of 1560. But when it met, Mary's resistless influence had been so used upon others that this — the first Parliament that met during her unfortunate reign—declined to occupy itself with the matter of the Protestant creed at all.

Knox knew that the hour was critical; and going into St. Giles's, he "poured forth the sorrows of his heart" before the assembled nobles and commonalty. "From the beginning of God's mighty working within this realm," he said, "I have been with you in your most desperate trials. In your most extreme dangers I have been with you: St. Johnstown, Cupar Moor, and the Craigs of Edinburgh are yet recent in my heart; yea, that dark and dolorous night wherein all ye, my Lords, with shame and fear, left this town is yet in my mind; and God forbid that ever I forget it!"

But from all those dangers they had been delivered, and was this the time to recede from the faith of Jesus Christ? How critical the time was, few but Knox himself and a few other statesmen knew. But his very next words hit the centre of the political complication.

"Now, my Lords, to put an end to all, I hear of the Queen's marriage. . . . Whensoever the nobility of Scotland professing the Lord Jesus consent that an infidel (and all Papists are infidels) shall be head to your Sovereign, you do so far as in you lieth to banish Christ Jesus from this realm."

Mary as well as Knox knew that this was the hinge of the whole question, and the preacher was instantly sent for to the palace. On his appearance the Queen burst into a passion of tears. Never had prince been handled as she was: she had borne with him, had listened to him, and had sought his favour—"and yet I cannot be quit of you. I vow to God, I shall be once revenged!" Knox stood unmoved, and then calmly reasoned that in the pulpit, and as preacher, he was not his own master, and was bound to instruct his hearers in their duty.

"But what have you to do with my marriage?" said Mary. Knox began to point out the importance of her marriage to the commonwealth; but the Queen impatiently repeated the question, and added, "What are *you* in this commonwealth?"

"Madam," answered Knox, "a subject born within the same. And albeit I be neither earl, lord, nor baron in it, yet has God made me (how abject that ever I be in your eyes) a profitable member within the same." And thereupon he repeated to her the same very practical doctrine which he had given in the pulpit two hours before.

Mary again had recourse to tears, and her indignation that the Reformer remained unmoved under them was not diminished by his quaint protest that he was really a tender-hearted man, and could scarcely bear to see his own children weep when corrected for their faults.

In December of the same year the Queen, who had now completely broken with him, summoned him to answer for treason in having "convoked her lieges" on the occasion of the trial of two men for a Protestant riot.

Again Knox appeared at the bar, and on this occasion no man stood by him. The Queen was sure of her victory. "That man," she said, looking round, "made me weep and shed never a tear himself; I will see if I can make him weep." This rash exultation was checked by the constant bearing of the accused, who through a long examination maintained his right to caution his countrymen against "the pestilent Papists, who have inflamed Your Grace against those poor men."

"You forget yourself," said the Chancellor; "you are not now in the pulpit."

"I am in the place," he answered, "where I am demanded of conscience to speak the truth, and therefore the truth I speak, impugn it whoso list."

The Lords of the Council, who at first frowned upon Knox, before the day closed pronounced him innocent by a majority. The Queen came back into the room, and the vote was taken in her presence over again; but with the same result. "That night was neither dancing nor fiddling in the Court"; and the firmness of Knox maintained the freedom of the Protestant cause all through the next year, 1564.

But in the meantime the greatest danger had passed away. The Prince of Spain, the chief of the candidates for the Queen's hand, was no longer in the field. The incessant diplomatic struggle between Mary and Elizabeth was ended by the sudden departure from the Court of the latter of "yonder long lad," as she described Lord Darnley, to woo the Scottish Queen. Mary's rather weak fancy for her handsome young countryman made no change in her political intentions. It was about this time that she signed the Catholic League for extermination of Protestantism, and her marriage with Darnley was made part of a scheme which had the approval of Philip. Knox understood the state of matters, and one of his first sermons after the marriage gave such umbrage to the Royal pair that he was forbidden to preach. The General Assembly appointed a Fast in view of the deadly purposes of the League, and the Queen on her side banished her half-brother, afterwards the Regent Murray, from the realm.

In a few months her now inconstant mind had completely turned from her neglected husband, and first the Italian Rizzio, and then one of her own nobles, the Earl Bothwell, became her confidant. Rizzio's ambition united the jealous Darnley with a number of the nobles in a blood-bond, and the result was that, on 9th March 1566, the favourite was dragged from the Queen's presence and stabbed to death on the stairs of Holyrood. Knox thought him an enemy both to Scotland and to Protestantism, and rejoiced over his overthrow, ruffianly though the manner of it was. Consequently, when the young Queen, springing to arms, united her adherents and drove out the conspirators, the petition of his Edinburgh congregation for Knox's recall was steadily refused, and he made a last visit to England, bearing with him a letter of recommendation from the General Assembly of his own Church.

Week by week the infatuation of Mary for Lord Bothwell, and her dislike of her husband, increased so as to attract the notice of all around. But in February 1567 there was a sudden reconciliation between her and Darnley. She brought him to a house in Kirk o' Field, in Edinburgh, and at midnight it was blown up with gunpowder by the servants of Bothwell. Then Bothwell waylaid and carried off the Queen, and proceeded to divorce his own wife. On 15th May, a day or two after that divorce, and only three months after the death of her second husband, the ill-fated Queen publicly married his murderer; and the strong shudder of disgust that passed throughout Scotland shook her throne to the ground. First the commons and then the nobles melted away from her; and in a short time her formal abdication anticipated that rejection by the people which Knox and Buchanan had always held to be among the rights of a free commonwealth.

The long struggle was over. Knox had no part in the unexpected ending. But he had been the head and heart of the battle while it was most doubtful and deadly; and now that it was past he was foremost in the arrangements of the new order of things. The Assembly of the Church and the Parliament of the realm both met; and the old enactments of 1560, in favour of the Religion, were ratified, with the addition of others acknowledging those who professed it to be the true Kirk of Christ within Scotland.

On 29th July 1567, in Stirling, the town which has always been the central clasp in the girdle of Scotland, the infant James, who was afterwards to ascend the English throne, was crowned King. And on this occasion also the Gospel, which his coronation oath recognised, was preached once more by the lips of John Knox.

And now his work—his twofold work—was done. From 1560 the Gospel had, no doubt, been free in Scotland. But from 1567 Scotland was free to work out the Gospel in its own way as a State and a Church. And the new light shone like the rising of the sun. Hitherto this had been a rude and bare country, "a country as yet without a soul." But now, as Carlyle puts it again, a fire "is kindled under the ribs of this outward material death. A cause, the noblest of causes, kindles itself, like a beacon set on high ; high as heaven, yet attainable from earth, whereby the meanest man becomes not a citizen only, but a member of Christ's visible Church ; a veritable hero, if he prove a true man."

And so all over Scotland was seen what Knox called "the building of the house"—the rearing of an unseen temple and house not made with hands. In this visible republic, with its invisible King, there was self-government, local and central. The elders and deacons of each town or parish met weekly with the pastor for the charge of the congregation. And these "particular Kirks" met yearly in Assembly to represent the "Universal Kirk," and to urge throughout Scotland not only the service of God, but the support and maintenance of the poor, and the interests of education in universities and schools. There were difficulties and dangers in plenty, some of them unforeseen. The nobles were rapacious, the people were divided, a broad belt of unreformed population stretched between the Highlands and Lowlands, Scottish Churchmen were already beginning to show the national tendency to dogmatism, and Scottish statesmen their less national tendency to Erastian absolutism—an absolutism which the Stuarts, transplanted to the English throne, were afterwards to push to extremes. There were a hundred difficulties like these, but they were all accepted as in the long day's work. For in Scotland the day-spring was now risen upon men!

But he who had broken open so great a door was now to leave the work to others. True, five years of honoured life remained to him, but to the world-wearied man they were years of labour and sorrow. Early in 1570 his friend, the good Regent Murray, was assassinated, and Knox preached his funeral sermon from the text "Blessed are the dead which die in the Lord!" Later on in that year Knox himself had a fit of apoplexy. Civil war broke out, and drove him to St. Andrews. There a graphic observer tells us how he used to see him in his last winter so weak that he had to be lifted by two men into the pulpit; but before the sermon was done he was like to "ding the pulpit in blads" (smite it into pieces) with his aged energy. Nor was his power over the spirit less than before. When he came to the application of his discourse, "he made me so to grue (*i.e.* thrill) and tremble, that I could not hold a pen to write."

In the inevitable anti-climax of failing life Knox found his compensations not in the world, nor even in the Church. "All worldly strength, yea, even in things spiritual," he writes to his colleague, "decays, and yet never shall the work of God decay. . . . Visit me, that we may confer together on heavenly things; for in earth there is no stability, except the Kirk of Jesus Christ, ever fighting under the cross." In those darkening days, even when he has merely to write his subscription, it is "John Knox, with my dead hand, but glad heart." In the beginning of September 1572 he lamented in the pulpit the massacre of St. Bartholomew. On 9th November he preached at the installation of his colleague, and henceforth never left his own house.

The day after he sickened he gave one of his servants twenty shillings above his fee, with the words, "Thou wilt never receive more from me in this life." Two days after, his mind wandered, and he wished to go to church "to preach on the resurrection of Christ." On Monday the 17th he asked the elders and deacons of his church, with the ministers of Edinburgh and Leith, to meet with him. "The day approaches," he said to them, "and is now before the door, for which I have frequently and vehemently thirsted, when I shall be released from my great labours and innumerable sorrows, and shall be with Christ. And now God is my witness, whom I have served in the spirit in the Gospel of His Son, that I have taught nothing but the true and solid doctrine of the Gospel of the Son of God, and have had it for my only object to instruct the ignorant, to confirm the faithful, to comfort the weak, the fearful, and the distressed, by the promises of grace, and to fight against the proud and rebellious by the Divine threatenings."

The Edinburgh burghers around him dissolved into tears as they took their last look of the worn and wearied face; but when they left he asked his two colleagues to remain. He wished to charge them with a warning message to Kirkcaldy of Grange, then holding the castle for the Queen. "That man's soul is dear to me, and I would not have it perish, if I could save it. Go to the castle and tell him, John Knox remains the same man now, when he is about to die, that ever he knew him when able in body."

One after another the nobles in Edinburgh, Lords Boyd, Drumlanrig, Lindsay, Ruthven, Glencairn, and Morton (then about to be elected Regent), had interviews with him. Gradually they all left, except his true friend Fairley of Braid. Knox turned to him:

"Every one bids me good-night; but when will you do it? I shall never be able to recompense you; but I commit you to One that is able to do it—to the Eternal God."

During the days that followed, his weakness reduced him to ejaculatory sentences of prayer. "Come, Lord Jesus. Sweet Jesus, into Thy hands I commend my spirit." But Scotland was still on his heart; and as Napoleon in his last hours was heard to mutter *tête d'armée*, so Knox's attendants caught the words, "Be merciful, O Lord, to Thy Church, which Thou hast redeemed. Give peace to this afflicted commonwealth. Raise up faithful pastors who will take charge of Thy Church. Grant us, Lord, the perfect hatred of sin, both by the evidences of Thy wrath and mercy." Sometimes he was conscious of those around, and seemed to address them. "O serve the Lord in fear, and death shall not be terrible to you. Nay, blessed shall death be to those who have felt the power of the death of the only begotten Son of God."

On his last Sabbath a more remarkable scene occurred. He had been lying quiet during the afternoon, and suddenly exclaimed, "If any be present let them come and see the work of God." His friend Elphinstone was sent for to the adjacent church, and on his arrival Knox burst out, "I have been these two last nights in meditation on the troubled state of the Church of God, the spouse of Jesus Christ, despised of the world, but precious in the sight of God. I have called to God for her, and have committed her to her head, Jesus Christ. I have fought against spiritual wickedness in heavenly things, and have prevailed. I have been in heaven and have possession. I have tasted of the heavenly joys where presently I am."

Next day, Monday, 24th November 1572, was his last on earth. His three most intimate friends sat by his bedside. Campbell of Kinyeancleugh asked him if he had any pain. "It is no painful pain," he said; "but such a pain as shall soon, I trust, put an end to the battle." To this friend he left in charge his wife, whom later in the day he asked to read him the fifteenth chapter to the Corinthians. When it was finished, "Now for the last time," he said, "I commend my soul, spirit, and body" (and as he spoke he touched three of his fingers) "into Thy hands, O Lord." Later in the day he called his wife again, "Go read where I cast my first anchor!" She turned to the seventeenth chapter of John, and followed it up with part of a sermon of Calvin on the Epistle to the Ephesians. Soon after Knox seemed to fall into a slumber, troubled with heavy moaning. All watched around him. Suddenly he woke, and being asked why he sighed, said that he had been sustaining a last assault of Satan. Often before had he tempted him to despair. Now he had sought to make him feel as if he had merited heaven by his faithful ministry. "But what have I that I have not received? Wherefore I give thanks to my God, through Jesus Christ, who hath been pleased to give me the victory; and I am persuaded that the tempter shall not again attack me, but within a short time I shall, without any great pain of body or anguish of mind, exchange this mortal and miserable life for a blessed immortality through Jesus Christ."

During the hours which followed he lay quite still, and they delayed reading the evening prayer till ten o'clock, thinking he was asleep. When it was finished, the doctor asked him if he had heard the prayers. "Would to God," he answered, "that you and all men had heard them as I have heard them; I praise God for that heavenly sound." As eleven o'clock drew on he gave a deep sigh and said, " Now it is come." His servant, Richard Bannatyne, drew near and called upon him to think upon the comfortable promises of Christ which he had so often declared to others. Knox was already speechless, but his servant pleaded for one sign that he heard them and that he died in peace. As if collecting his whole strength he lifted up his right hand heavenwards, and sighing twice, peacefully expired.

It was fit that such a life should have such a close. Knox had never been a man of " a private spirit," and he had long since become the champion of his cause in the eyes of Europe. But the true roots of that public work were in the personal and private faith, which he held to be founded on the Word of God. His work was the outgrowth of that individual faith, which he felt to be true, as found in a heroic and aggressive soul. The fire had been originally kindled in this man's own spirit. So when Scotland needed a beacon, he became himself its burning and shining light. And now that the fuel of external opportunity was in age withdrawn, the flame within did not flicker out along with it. The faith which had so long borne for others the strain of such a life was found at last able to bear for itself the strain of death.

JOHN FOXE

(1516–1587)

By
S. G. Green, D.D.

THE life of John Foxe, the distinguished annalist of Christian martyrdom, was passed amid great and stirring events. The year of his birth was that in which Luther affixed his *Theses* to the door of the cathedral in Wittenberg; the year of his death witnessed the execution of Mary Queen of Scots. In the crowd of distinguished personages who made the Reformation era famous, Foxe held not the least illustrious place. We find him at one period of his life a correspondent of Calvin and an associate of Knox. In later days he enjoyed the friendship of Sir Francis Drake, Sir Thomas Gresham, and Cecil, Lord Burleigh, while to Queen Elizabeth he was "Father Foxe." Among ecclesiastics he was on intimate terms with Archbishop Grindal, Bishops Aylmer, Parkhurst, and Pilkington; Bale, Bishop of Ossory, and Nowell, the eloquent Dean of St. Paul's. Though living for the most part a retired literary life, he had no small influence in matters of state, while his popularity among all classes of the community was almost unbounded. The book by which he is known to succeeding generations became from the time of its publication, and has remained for over three hundred years, one of the household treasures of Protestant England; while to this day,

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in country churches scattered through our land, may be found black-letter copies of the *Book of Martyrs*, which were chained to the reading-desk in the days when readers were few, and which taught to multitudes of old and young the great lessons of fidelity to conscience and attachment to the verities of an uncorrupted Gospel.

John Foxe was born in the year 1516, in Boston, Lincolnshire, where, according to his son and biographer, "his father and mother were of the commonalty of the town, well reported of and of good estate." The elder Foxe died while John was young, and the widow married again; the stepfather being, as it would appear, at first kindly disposed to a lad whose genius and earnestness were far beyond the good man's understanding. Of Foxe's early life we know but little, save that he was sent to the University of Oxford at the age of sixteen, entering at Brasenose College. Here he became friend and "chamber-fellow" of Alexander Nowell, afterwards Dean of St. Paul's, a strong adherent of the Reformed faith. In 1539 Foxe was elected a Fellow of Magdalen College—a distinction which sufficiently proves the high reputation for scholarship which he had already gained.

The nine or ten years between Foxe's matriculation and his election to the Fellowship were among the most eventful in the history of the Reformation. In 1534 the Parliament of England renounced the Papal Supremacy. In the year following the first complete English Bible was published by Miles Coverdale, followed two years later by the revised, or "Great Bible," the use of which was enjoined in all English churches. Meantime, persecution was not idle. The "Act of the Six Articles," passed in 1539, made the denial of Transubstantiation an offence punishable by death at the stake. To affirm the Papal *supremacy* was treason; to deny the Papal *doctrines* was heresy—a cruel dilemma! These things, and the controversies thence arising, could not but awaken deep reflection in the mind of the youthful and earnest Oxford student. A deep seriousness already formed the groundwork of his character, and he had found the secret of peace with God through Christ. At first he accepted the tenets of the religious community in which he had been educated; but in these he could not long rest.

"I have often heard Master Foxe affirm," writes his biographer, "that the first matter which occasioned his search into the Popish doctrine was that he saw divers things in their own natures most repugnant to one another, thrust upon men at one time to be both believed: as that the same man might in matters of faith be superior and yet in life and manners be inferior to all the world besides. Upon this beginning, his resolution and intended obedience to that Church were somewhat shaken; and by little and little followed some dislike to the rest. His first care was to look into both the ancient and modern history of the Church, to learn what beginning it had, what growth and increase; by what arts it flourished, and by what errors it began to decline; to consider the causes of all those controversies which in the mean space had sprung up, and to weigh diligently of what moment they were, and what on either side was produced, sound or infirm. This he performed with such heat of study, and in so short a time, that before the thirtieth year of his age he had read over all that either the Greek or Latin Fathers had left in their writings, the Schoolmen in their disputations, the Councils in their acts, or the Consistory in their decrees, and acquired no small skill in the Hebrew language."

These studies for a time engrossed the days and nights of the future martyrologist. In a dark grove near Magdalen College he would spend long evenings pacing to and fro, with prayers and cries pouring out his soul to God. His companions marvelled at a passionate earnestness which they could not understand. They were scandalised by the infrequency with which he now attended the services of the Church, and he was at length called to account by the authorities of the college for his altered demeanour. He confessed that in many things he was not of one mind with them; and although they forbore to proceed to the worst extremities against one who had already achieved distinction as a scholar, Foxe resigned his fellowship in 1545.

On leaving Oxford, Foxe became tutor to the children of Sir Thomas Lucy, at Charlecote, Warwickshire. His eldest pupil would no doubt be the Thomas Lucy whom Shakespeare (who was born nineteen years after Foxe entered Charlecote) has depicted for the laughter of all time as Mr. Justice Shallow. The fact is that this worthy country knight was a sturdy, inflexible Puritan, with little mercy on the poet's youthful escapades; and Shakespeare revenged himself by the caricature. Something in the stern Protestantism of the Warwickshire squire may have been traceable to the influence of his old tutor. But Foxe remained here scarcely a year, having however wooed and won beneath this roof the daughter of a Coventry citizen, who seems to have come hither on a visit. Soon after their marriage the wedded pair went to Coventry, to the bride's father. Hence he wrote to his stepfather, proposing to return to Boston for a while. The answer was a grudging permission. It was hard, said the cautious burgher, that he should be asked to receive one whom he knew to be "condemned for a capital offence; neither was he ignorant what hazard he should undergo in so doing; nevertheless he would show himself a kinsman, and for that cause neglect his own danger." Should Foxe alter his opinions, he might come and stay as long as he pleased; but if he persisted in his present views he must be contented with "a shorter tarriance, and not bring him and his mother into hazard of their lives and fortunes, who were ready to do anything for his sake." On this slight encouragement Foxe returned to Boston for a while, the more especially because, as his son puts it, "he was underhand advised by his mother to come." "Do not be afraid," was the good woman's message to her son. "My husband is obliged for appearance' sake to write as he has done; but give him the opportunity, and his kind entertainment will make amends for his harsh words."

The visit was a short one. It was impossible for a person so marked as Foxe had become to remain unnoticed in a country town. London was safest; and some new dissensions between Foxe and his stepfather appear to have hastened the youthful scholar's resolution to go thither. He went, accordingly, to the metropolis, a stranger; and for a time he wandered there almost hopelessly in search of employment. But one day a wonderful thing occurred to him, which he always regarded as a special interposition of Divine Providence, and which proved the turning-point of his career.

He was sitting disconsolately in St. Paul's Cathedral. His resources were entirely exhausted, and he had come even to want bread. The cathedral was then a great thoroughfare, and passers-by shrank from the ghastly face and poverty-stricken garb of the solitary stranger. Suddenly an unknown person took a seat by his side, courteously saluted him, and bidding him to be of good cheer, thrust a purse of gold into his hand and disappeared. Greatly wondering, Foxe returned to his poor lodging. Who his benefactor was he never learned. But, three days after the interview Foxe was sent for by the Duchess of Richmond, and requested to undertake the tuition of three children to whom, as their aunt, she was guardian. Their father, the Earl of Surrey, was in prison in the Tower, with his father the old Duke of Norfolk, and was soon after beheaded on a charge of high treason, the Duke being detained in captivity for some years longer. The young Howards entrusted to Foxe's charge were Thomas, afterwards, in succession to his grandfather, Duke of Norfolk; Henry, who became Earl of Northampton; and Jane, afterwards Countess of Westmoreland.

King Henry died in January 1547, and the accession of the youthful Edward VI. gave new hope to Protestants. Foxe was now safe, and with his young wife dwelt peacefully in the pretty Surrey village of Reigate, instructing his young pupils and rejoicing in their proficiency: the Lady Jane especially, like her friend and companion the Lady Jane Grey, being "not unworthy of comparison with the most learned men of that time for the praise of elegancy in learning." While at Reigate Foxe was ordained deacon (by Ridley, Bishop of London, 23rd June 1550), and began forthwith to preach, "zealously," his successor, Richard Day, relates, "removing also from the village the idolatrous symbols of Rome." Nor was his pen idle. He wrote in Latin some treatises on Church discipline, and in particular prepared an *Address to Parliament* at a time when, through the intrigues of Stephen Gardiner, a Popish reaction was threatened. "Not only a rumour," he said, "but a most positive assertion has gone abroad, that those sanguinary laws known by the title of the Six Articles, once laid to sleep, are about to be, as it were, recalled from Hades to earth. If this be true," he adds, "I well know how deadly and ominous it will prove to the kingdom." But the fear, happily, proved groundless; and the six years of King Edward's reign passed peacefully away. The old Duke of Norfolk was released from prison on Mary's accession, and being a strong Romanist, promptly dismissed Foxe from the tutorship of his grandson. But in 1554 the youth succeeded to the dukedom, and in gratitude for the services of his tutor granted him for a time a small pension. Gardiner, now Bishop of Winchester and one of the Queen's chief advisers, was, however, intimate with the young Duke, and it became necessary for the Reigate pastor to seek another refuge.

The departure of Foxe was hastened by a circumstance which proved to him how narrowly he was watched. Gardiner, who had previously made many inquiries about him, was paying a visit to the Duke, when Foxe happened to come into the room, and, seeing who was there, hurriedly withdrew. "Who was that?" the Bishop keenly asked. The Duke, in confusion, evasively replied, "It is my physician; but he is fresh from college, and his manners are somewhat uncourtly." "Ha!" said Gardiner, "I like his countenance and aspect very well, and on occasion I will send for him." The words portended mischief, and Foxe was conveyed secretly to a farmhouse on the Duke's estate, the Duke making hurried arrangements for despatching him to the Continent. In a few days all was ready, and Foxe, accompanied by his wife, crossed the country to "Ipswich-haven," whence he immediately set sail. The vessel encountered a storm, and was obliged to put back. But while Foxe was tossing about in the German Ocean, a messenger from

Bishop Gardiner had arrived at the farmhouse, with a warrant to apprehend him and convey him to Winchester for trial. Finding that he had departed, the messenger chased him to the coast, arriving only a few hours after the ship had set sail. Foxe, on landing again at Ipswich, learned how narrow had been his escape, and at once re-embarked, reaching Nieuport with his wife after a long and stormy passage.

John Foxe was now an exile, with few or no possessions save some precious manuscripts, to publish which was his first anxiety. From Nieuport he proceeded to Antwerp, and thence to Strassburg, whither Edmund Grindal had preceded him. The two friends instantly set the press to work, and before the close of the year Foxe's volume appeared, in Latin, an octavo of about four hundred pages, entitled : *Commentaries on the Affairs of the Church, and an Account of the Chief Persecutions in all Europe from the days of Wyclif to the present time. First Book, by John Foxe, Englishman.* Such was the germ and first outline of the *Acts and Monuments.*

Soon after the publication of this book, we find Foxe at Frankfort, where a company of refugees from Great Britain had already gathered, including John Knox, William Whittingham, brother-in-law to Calvin, and afterwards Dean of Durham ; with William Kethe, to whom English Christians are under lasting obligation for his version of the Hundredth Psalm :

> All people that on earth do dwell,

and many more. Here they formed a little Protestant English congregation, and worshipped harmoniously together, until strange and unexpected troubles arose. A certain number of the exiles were bent upon introducing the English liturgy. This was strenuously resisted by Knox and the exiles who had first arrived ; and a long acrimonious discussion ensued, Calvin declaring it to be shame that " brethren banished and driven out of the country for their common faith should fall into dissension over such details." But methods of conciliation were attempted in vain. On one particular Sunday (in March 1555) the dispute came to a crisis ; the Litany with responses being read in the morning, and Knox in the afternoon with fiery eloquence protesting on behalf of the Genevan form. The consequent dispute ran so high, that in a few days Knox was compelled to leave the city, a charge of treasonable utterances against the Emperor being improvised against him. Foxe adhered to the Geneva model, while in a truly large-hearted way he deplored the unnatural strife ; writing to his friend and associate Peter Martyr : " This controversy has rendered almost all the winter sterile and profitless. For though I would fain have held aloof from the business, I could not be an altogether uninterested spectator." " Mere striplings," he adds, " and even children enter with zeal into the dispute. Yet it is the more astonishing that even gray-headed theologians, who ought to employ their authority for the promotion of concord, fling their brands upon the flame." " I could never have believed," continues Foxe, " that there could be so much rancour in men whose constant dealing with the Holy Scriptures ought to have disposed them to all gentleness and loving-kindness ! " He still hoped that by conference and mutual concession some form of liturgy might be agreed upon, to which both sides could assent. To his broad and liberal mind the obligations of charity were far greater than those of any ecclesiastical forms. But his efforts to allay the dispute were unavailing. The intervention of the magistrates was sought ; and these pronounced at length for the Anglican order. Knox, who had meantime sought refuge in France, went to Geneva with some of his companions, and was elected pastor of the English church in that city. Foxe and others went to Basel.

At Basel Foxe found employment with a famous printer, Oporinus, as corrector of the press and general editor of his publications. By this occupation Foxe earned a scanty livelihood for himself, his wife, and an infant son who had been born at Frankfort; occupying, however, the greatest part of the time in the preparation of his great work. Herein he laboured, says a contemporary, "with a most distracted kind of diligence," employing no amanuensis, but transcribing every document with his own hands. In the accumulation of material he was greatly assisted by Grindal, then at Strassburg, as well as by John Aylmer, who had been tutor to Lady Jane Grey, and who in later years, when Bishop of London, became a bitter enemy of the Puritans. Meantime, at the press of Oporinus, Foxe printed some of the sketches and biographical notices which were to be incorporated in his larger work. He published also a religious drama, under the title of *Christus Triumphans*—"Christ Triumphant, an Apocalyptic Drama. 'The Spirit and the Bride say Come.'" He wrote also, but was unable to publish, a Latin translation of Cranmer's reply to Gardiner on the Eucharistic controversy, being much hindered in his task by want of opportunity to consult original documents. His complaint on this score throws an interesting light on his habit of historic accuracy. "You know," Foxe says, "how it is not handsome to bring in doctors speaking otherwise than in their own words." Foxe, as a narrator, was as faithful as he was painstaking.

The years of Foxe's residence at Basel were those in which the persecution under Mary raged with its utmost severity. We can well imagine the eagerness of interest, the agonies of sorrow, the transports of holy indignation, with which the exiles would receive the tidings which continually came from England. Many a simple and pathetic narrative, the testimony of eyewitnesses, crossed the seas during those anxious months, reaching Grindal at Strassburg, and forwarded by him to Basel, where Foxe, with Aylmer and Pilkington at his side, turned the homely English into his own rugged and vigorous Latin, working day and night at his *Commentaries*, until his attenuated frame bore witness at once to the severity of his toil and the terrible intenseness of his sympathy.

At length the change came in the affairs of England. It was stedfastly asserted by many, and by Aylmer among the rest, that on a day in November 1558, when Foxe was preaching to the English exiles, he suddenly bade them be of good cheer, "for now was the time come for their return into England, and that he brought them that news by the commandment of God." The "graver divines then present" sharply reproved the preacher; but their rebukes were silenced when they found that Queen Mary had died on the day before the sermon was preached.

On the accession of Queen Elizabeth many of the exiles hastened to return. Foxe was delayed partly by want of means—he had now two children, a boy and a girl, to support—partly from the necessity of seeing his book through the press; but he celebrated the occasion by a courtly address to Her Majesty in the name of the German people, in which, after speaking of the refuge which had been afforded by them to the exiles for conscience' sake, he gives valuable counsel to the Queen, to her advisers, and to the preachers of the Gospel. "Father Foxe" was by this time so well known that he could venture to offer frank advice. For nearly a year longer he remained at Basel, until in 1559 his *Commentaries*, again in Latin, issued from the press of Oporinus. The narrative was in six parts, and in the preface to the third Foxe gave the interesting information that "the first to suggest to him that he should write a history of the martyrs was Lady Jane Grey." In a touching and noble dedication Foxe inscribed the work to his friend and former pupil, the Duke of Norfolk.

The first intimation that we can find of Foxe's return to England is in a letter addressed by him to his old pupil, 1559. The letter speaks with manly and affecting simplicity of the writer's indigent circumstances, and suggests that a renewal of the assistance which he had formerly received from the Duke would be very acceptable. At the same time Foxe, with characteristic faithfulness, presses home upon his noble patron the claims of the Gospel and the obligations to personal godliness. "You will do wisely," he says, "if you employ that time in the reading of the Scriptures which others bestow on pomps and pastimes of the Court." The Duke frankly responded, intimating that he had already made arrangements for Foxe's comfort, and inviting him to his London mansion in Aldgate. Here Foxe seems to have lived for some time, with intervals spent in other parts of England. We find him at Norwich in 1560 with Parkhurst, one of his fellow-exiles, now bishop of that diocese. Some preferment appears to have been here proposed to Foxe, but for some reason the plan fell through. In all probability the Church as restored under Elizabeth still retained too much of the former ritual to be acceptable to the sturdy Puritan. Foxe, however, accepted in 1564 a small prebend in the diocese of Salisbury, where he was left at liberty to carry out his convictions. In the general unsettlement of that transition-period, the conditions of clerical life in one diocese differed much from those in another. For a short time he appears to have been vicar of St. Giles', Cripplegate; but this charge he resigned from conscientious difficulty in subscribing to the canons. "John Foxe," writes Fuller in his *Church History of Great Britain*, "was summoned by Archbishop Parker to subscribe, that the general reputation of his piety might give the greater countenance to conformity. The old man produced the New Testament in Greek. 'To this,' said he, 'I will subscribe.' But when a subscription to the canons was required of him, he refused it, saying, 'I have nothing in the Church save a prebend at Salisbury; and much good may it do you if you will take it away from me!'" He was, however, left unmolested in this preferment, which he retained till his death. But his work lay rather in the direction of authorship, and we have authentic records of very few of his sermons. The most noteworthy of these was preached at Paul's Cross, on Good Friday 1570, after the publication of the Papal bull excommunicating the Queen. The ordeal was one to which the diffident literary recluse looked forward with the greatest apprehension. Bishop Grindal, his old comrade, had urged him to the task, and would take no denial. "Our friends," writes Foxe, "urge, press, solicit me by every means, by entreaties, threats, upbraidings." "Who could have instigated you," he asks of Grindal, "thus to think of crucifying me at Paul's Cross? There never was ass or mule so weighed down by burdens as I have long been by literary labours. I am almost worn out by their toils, and by my ill-health. Yet I am summoned to that celebrated pulpit, where, like an ape among cardinals, I shall be received with derision or driven away by the hisses of the auditory!" Grindal, in reply, simply counselled Foxe to forget self and to preach Jesus Christ and Him crucified. This encouraged his shrinking spirit, and when the day came, he was enabled to discourse with great freedom and power.[1] "Now then are we messengers in the room of Christ"—so reads the text from 2 Corinthians v. 20, in the days before the Authorised Version—"Even as though God did beseech you through us, so pray we you in Christ's stead that ye be reconciled unto God." The sermon is outspoken against Papal corruptions of the Gospel, and abounds in fervent evangelical appeals to the souls of men.

As soon as Foxe had settled in England he addressed himself to what was to prove the work of his life—the preparation of an English edition of his *Commentaries*, greatly enlarged. This work he carried on for a while in the mansion of the Duke of Norfolk, in Aldgate, and the printing of the book seemed soon to have begun. John Day, the printer, was a man altogether like-minded with Foxe. His printing-offices were in Aldersgate, partly upon the city wall; and he had shops besides for the sale of his books in other parts of the city, particularly "near the west door of St. Paul's Cathedral." We may picture Foxe every Monday, as his manner was, wending his way over the Corn Hill, past the open space where workmen were preparing the foundations of Gresham's new Exchange; then beneath the overhanging gables of

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[1] The sermon was republished, with a recommendatory Preface by George Whitefield, 1759.

Cheapside,—a man noted by many, greeting few or none, of abstracted air, with emaciated form, sunken cheeks, neglected garb,—until he reached the house of his trusty friend, with whom, in the snug chamber "over Aldersgate," he read his copy prepared during the previous week, examined and corrected proofs, and conferred respecting the progress of the work. That progress was indeed amazing, since in 1563 the first edition, in one folio black-letter volume, was completed. At some stage, we cannot accurately tell which, in the progress of the work, Foxe found it necessary to leave the ducal mansion. His first lodgings were with Mr. Day himself; afterwards in Grub Street, near Cripplegate, long a favourite abode of authors. Here he toiled unremittingly, preparing another edition of his great work, much enlarged, which was published in 1570. Other editions followed in 1576 and 1583.

The *Book of Martyrs*, as it was already called, was received by the people with the most eager interest. It had all the fascination of a contemporary history; many of the actors in the scenes it portrayed were still living, and there were multitudes who had numbered them among their own kindred and friends. Most of them to us are but names; yet our own souls are moved by the thrilling narrative. What must have been the feelings of those who well remembered standing by while the grim processions moved onward to the stake!

By order of Queen Elizabeth, issued after the appearance of the second edition, copies of the work were to be placed in the parish churches, also in the halls of hospitals, colleges, schools, and other public institutions. Some of these massive volumes still remain, black with age, and bearing on their solid leathern bindings traces of the ring to which was attached the chain securing the precious volume to the reading-desk. Many a group would gather to listen, absorbed in the more than heroic tale, while from the lips of the best reader in the village they learned how their own friends and kindred had borne brave witness to Christ, and laid down their lives amid fiery torments rather than surrender an iota of His truth.

It was but natural that such a book should awaken fierce opposition. The Papists called it "Master Foxe's Golden Legend," and denounced it as a mass of inventions. So bold were they in their assertions that the imputation has gained general currency among those unacquainted with the facts of the case; and it is too frequent in modern times to speak of Foxe as a one-sided, inaccurate historian. A few errors in names and dates have given colour to the charge. Some of his information, again, was necessarily from hearsay, and may have been accepted without adequate sifting. Occasionally, too, the glowing indignation, without which the narrator of such facts would surely be less than man, will gain the upper hand. "He writes," says one, "with somewhat more fervency than circumspection"; and so becomes "intemperate," forsooth! as he tells how brave men and tender women, and mere boys, were done to death amid fiery torments for not accepting what they believed to be a lie! The wonder is that the recorder of such infernal deeds could ever have been calm! Dr. Jeremy Collier, the nonjuror bishop in the days of William III., and others of an earlier day, made the most of these deviations from judicial coolness, as well as of the lapses into inaccuracy to which the chronicler of so great a multitude of facts was liable; while in our own time Professor Brewer, followed by Dean Hook,[1] has brought unproved accusations against the martyrologist's fidelity; but on the whole, every one who will impartially examine into the matter may well stand amazed not only at the fulness and variety of the narrative, but at its generally sober temper and solicitous regard to historic truth. For one thing, Foxe is uniformly careful, whenever possible, to give official documents, being mostly those of his own day, taken from the Bishops' Registers, and open to the most jealous scrutiny. The testimony of Bishop Burnet is very valuable: "In some private passages which were brought to him upon flying reports, Foxe made a few mistakes, being too credulous; but in the account he gives from records or papers he is a most exact and faithful writer; so that I could never find him in any prevarication or so much as a designed concealment. He tells the good and the bad, the weakness and the passion, as well as the constancy and patience, of those good men who sealed their faith with their blood."[2]

To the same effect writes the famous Bishop of Lincoln, Dr. Christopher Wordsworth. "I am not ignorant of what has been said" (by Dr. Milner and other Romanist writers), "but neither his writings nor theirs have proved, and it never will be proved, that John Foxe is not one of the most faithful and authentic of all historians. All the many researches and discoveries of later times in regard to historical documents have only contributed to place the general fidelity and truth of Foxe's narrative on a rock which cannot be shaken."

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[1] See *Lives of the Archbishops of Canterbury*, vol. vi. p. 148. Full and detailed vindications of Foxe's trustworthiness will be found in the editions of his *Acts and Monuments*, by Canon Townshend, the Rev. Josiah Pratt, and Dr. Stoughton (R.T.S.). See especially the latter, vol. i. ch. ii. pp. 73-81.

[2] Burnet, *Hist. Ref.* part ii. book ii. vol. ii. p. 492. Oxford, 1865.

Mr. Foxe gradually became a very notable person in the City of London. Men and women of all classes frequented his humble home in Grub Street to ask his counsel or to receive his instructions. The Duke of Norfolk continued to be his friend, and Foxe in turn was a faithful friend to him. The commission given by Queen Elizabeth to this Duke to receive Mary Queen of Scots, when she sought refuge in this country in 1568, and to examine into the charges against her, seems to have turned the head of the young nobleman. Either he was smitten with love for the beautiful and hapless captive, or else the possibilities of success in the intrigues of which she was the centre awakened strange ambitions in his breast. Certain it is that at one time he was bent upon marrying her, and a letter of Foxe is extant strongly dissuading him from this step. By degrees the Duke became more and more involved in the conspiracies of Mary's adherents, in England, France, and Spain. He was at length committed to the Tower, tried and condemned for high treason; and in July 1572 John Foxe had the mournful task of attending his former pupil to the scaffold. Dean Nowell also was by his side; and such comfort as was possible was derived from the fact that the Duke died penitent and in the Protestant faith. The Duke's small pension to Foxe was continued by bequest; and there is reason to believe that the successful author was now at least beyond the reach of want.

Another event of deep and sad significance well brought out the nobler features of this good man's character. A congregation of Anabaptists from Holland had established a conventicle at Aldgate. Twenty-seven of the number had been seized, charged with holding heretical and blasphemous doctrines concerning the Divine nature. Four of these were made to recant these doctrines publicly at Paul's Cross. Ten were banished; most of the others were left in disregarded obscurity; but one of those who had recanted soon reaffirmed his obnoxious opinions, another refused altogether to retract his avowal of belief, and, after long debate with their judges, these two were condemned as obstinate heretics. The old Act *de haeretico comburendo*, under which the Marian martyrs had suffered, was put into force after seventeen years of desuetude, and these men were sentenced to death at the stake. Now was the time to test the breadth of Foxe's principles. Would it prove that, like some others who had bravely borne the brunt of persecution, he was ready to persecute in turn those whose beliefs he thought heretical? Not so. He intervened on behalf of these Anabaptists with passionate protest, denouncing their opinions, but appealing to the Queen against the punishment decreed. The long Latin letter addressed to Her Majesty on the subject has been preserved.[1]

"To burn to death," he says, "those who err rather from blindness of judgment than from the impulse of their will appears to be more after the example of Rome than according to the principles of the Gospel." Foxe does not argue against another mode of punishment. "Only," he says, "I do plead earnestly that Your Majesty will not allow those fires of Smithfield, which under your most auspicious rule have long been extinguished, now to be rekindled." But Elizabeth was inflexible: all that could be gained was a month's respite, to induce the condemned persons to recant. This proved ineffectual; the advisers of Elizabeth argued that "if after punishing traitors she now spared blasphemers, the world would condemn her as being more earnest in asserting her own safety than God's honour." To the lasting disgrace of her reign, the two Anabaptists were burned in Smithfield, 22nd July 1575.

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[1] See Fuller's *Church History of Great Britain*, book ix. sec. iii. 13.

Nor was it only in the case of sufferers for their *religious* belief that Foxe threw his influence into the scale of mercy. It can scarcely be doubted that Edmund Campian and Robert Parsons, the Jesuits, with their coadjutors in the transactions of 1580, were but the agents of a deep-laid plot against the Queen and kingdom. In no sense did they die for their religion, unless indeed the denial of the Royal supremacy within the realm of England be regarded as an article of faith. Yet none the less did Foxe counsel moderation and lenity in dealing with them. "I could produce letters of his," writes his son, "wherein he persuadeth the lords and others who then held the place of chiefest authority not to suffer Edmund Campian and his fellow-conspirators to be put to death, nor to let that custom continue longer in the kingdom that death rather than some other punishment should be inflicted on the Papist offenders. He endeavoured to prove by many reasons how much it was to the weakening of the cause to follow the example of their adversaries." The great martyrologist was, in truth, a man before his times, and for a while his counsels fell upon heedless ears; yet it is much to know that he who had written so sternly and passionately on the cruel deeds of Romish persecutors could stedfastly resist the temptation to retaliate in kind, and not allow either the perils of the State and the Queen or the excited demands of the people to silence his pleading for justice and mercy.

We know but little of Foxe's domestic relations. After his return to England nothing appears in the records concerning his mother and his stepfather, or his father-in-law; nor does he seem to have visited either Coventry or Boston. These relatives probably were no longer living. His wife was a homely, loving matron, as appears from an affectionate ill-spelled letter to one of her sons, Samuel, to whom the anonymous biography of Foxe has been attributed, but doubtfully. This Samuel appears to have given the good old man some anxiety; not so much, however, from anything actually vicious, as from a tendency to ostentation which must have been peculiarly abhorrent to the father. While a fellow of Magdalen College, Oxford, the youth went for a journey abroad without the permission of the college authorities. He returned in garments of a fashionable cut, and presented himself for his father's blessing. "Why," said Foxe, "what fine gentleman have we here?" "Do you not know me?" was the reply; "I am Samuel, your son." "Ah," rejoined the father, "what enemy of thine hath taught thee so much vanity?" The College treated the youth more severely, and expelled him, on the charge of Romish proclivities. But Foxe would not submit to this, and wrote a long letter to the authorities,[1] in which he strongly took his son's part, and attributed the young man's expulsion to internal dissensions in the college. The old martyrologist does not disguise his fears that the Puritan party will now themselves prove intolerant. "I perceive," he says, "a certain race of men rising up, who, if they should increase and gather strength in this kingdom, I am sorry to say what disturbance I foresee must follow it." Samuel Foxe was restored by Royal mandate, and we hear no more of his tendencies to Popery.

Although he was so much of a recluse, the company and counsel of Foxe were continually sought. "There repaired unto him both citizens and strangers, noblemen and common people of all degrees, and almost all for the same cause, to seek some salve for a wounded conscience." Many of his letters of spiritual counsel have been preserved—some of them dealing with very personal matters. Thus among his correspondence preserved in the British Museum there is a letter to him "from one under temptation to blaspheme, requesting counsel." Several letters are to persons in concern about their spiritual state, whom with loving counsel he exhorts to seek their rest in Christ. One of the longest and most interesting of the communications is to a young lady, to whom he earnestly and argumentatively recommends a youth as husband. What effect was produced by the epistle we do not know.

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[1] Fuller gives the letter in its original Latin (*Church History of Great Britain*, book ix. sec. iii. 14).

He had a kindly humour, and occasionally a caustic tongue. "Going abroad by chance, he met a woman that he knew, who, pulling a book from under her arm and saying, 'See you not that I am going to a sermon?' Master Foxe replied: 'But if you will be ruled by me, go home rather, for to-day you will do but little good at church.' And when she asked, 'At what time therefore he would counsel her to go?' then answered he, 'When you tell nobody beforehand.'

"When a young man, a little too forward, had said, in presence of many, 'that he could conceive no reason in the reading of the old authors why men should so greatly admire them,' 'No marvel indeed,' quoth Master Foxe; 'for if you could conceive the reason, you would admire them yourself.'"

The currency of anecdotes like these shows that Foxe had no small social influence. That he employed it wisely and well is certain. Some indeed there were who were so impressed by the charm of his words, enforced as these were by his almost ghostly aspect, that they were ready to attribute to him powers to which he had no claim. "Some who were sick in body would needs be carried to him. But this practice, to stop rumours, he would not suffer. For, because they were brought thither, they were by some reported to be cured." It is to a tendency of this kind that the epithet *thaumaturgus*, inscribed upon his tomb in St. Giles', Cripplegate, has been attributed. And yet the epitaph, a translation of which we give below, obviously bears another meaning; as it explains the "wonder-working" power of Foxe to be shown in his recalling the martyrs as alive from the dead.

At last, worn out by old age and incessant labour, the great martyrologist died at the age of seventy. The year of his decease was one of dread in England, owing to the preparations that were made by Spain for the onslaught of the great Armada. Amid the overhanging cloud the stedfast voice of Foxe was heard predicting the failure of the attempt. He was no prophet, but he read the signs of the times: he trusted in God and had faith in the destinies of England.

"Upon the report of his death the whole city lamented, honouring the small funeral which was made for him with the concourse of a great multitude of people, and in no other fashion of mourning than as if among so many each man had buried his own father or his own brother." His monument in St. Giles' Church, Cripplegate, bears an inscription in Latin, written by his son Samuel:

"To John Foxe, most faithful martyrologist of the English Church, most sagacious explorer of historical antiquity, most valiant defender of evangelical truth: an admirable thaumaturge, who has brought again as living from their ashes, like Phœnixes, the Marian martyrs: Samuel Foxe his first-born has, with dutiful affection and tears, erected this monument. He died April 18, A.D. 1587, at the age of seventy. *Life's duration is mortal, its hope immortal.*"

RICHARD HOOKER

(1553–1600)

By

T. H. L. Leary, D.C.L.

RICHARD HOOKER was born at Heavitree, near Exeter, in the year 1553. His parents were poor, but godly and industrious, and spared no pains to give their children the advantage of a good education. As a schoolboy Richard was remarkable for gentleness and modesty, no less than for the extraordinary intellectual gifts, which earned him the by-name of "The Little Wonder."

When his parents were about to apprentice their gifted son to a trade, his schoolmaster persuaded them (to use the words of his early biographer, Izaak Walton) "to continue him at school, till he could find out some means, by persuading his rich uncle or some other charitable person, to ease them of a part of their care and charge; assuring them that their son was so enriched with the blessings of nature and grace, that God seemed to single him out as a special instrument of His glory. And the good man told them also that he would double his diligence in instructing him, and would neither expect nor receive any other reward than the content of so hopeful and happy an employment. This was not unwelcome news, and especially to his mother, to whom he was a dutiful and dear child; and all parties were so pleased with this pro-

RICHARD HOOKER.

posal that it was resolved so it should be. And in the meantime his parents and master laid a foundation for his future happiness, by instilling into his soul the seeds of piety."

The kindly offices of the good schoolmaster did not rest here. He brought his pupil's great abilities and godly principles before the notice of Hooker's uncle, John Hooker, chamberlain of the city of Exeter, and a personal friend of the learned Reformer, Dr. Jewel, also a Devonshire man, whom Queen Elizabeth had appointed Bishop of Salisbury. The uncle besought the good Bishop, so well known to be a liberal patron of poor scholars, to look favourably upon his poor nephew, "whom nature had fitted for a scholar, but the estate of his parents was so narrow that they were unable to give him the advantage of learning; and that the Bishop would therefore become his patron, and so prevent him from being a tradesman, for he was a boy of remarkable hopes."

The result of this application was an interview of the Bishop with Richard Hooker and his schoolmaster. The Bishop was so charmed with the boy's sweetness of manner and his intellectual force that he forthwith became his patron, and provided at once for his future education by a pension. At the same time the Bishop liberally rewarded the schoolmaster who had evinced so persistent and kindly an interest in his pupil. By the Bishop's appointment Hooker entered Corpus Christi College, Oxford, of which Dr. Cole was then President, in his fifteenth year, as a Bible Clerk—an office which, with his patron's liberal pension, gave him a comfortable maintenance.

At Oxford Dr. John Reynolds, one of the most distinguished scholars in the University, was tutor to Hooker, whose unremitting attention to his studies, and natural amiability of disposition, modesty, and earnest devotion, won him the esteem and affection of all who knew him in his academical career. In his eighteenth year this most diligent and devout of students fell, from sheer overwork, into a dangerous illness that lasted more than two months. During the whole of this critical period the prayers of his pious mother went up almost hourly to God for her son s recovery. The mother's prayers were heard, and her grateful son "would often mention this with much joy and gratitude, and as often pray that he might never live to occasion any sorrow to so good a mother; of whom he would often say, he loved her so dearly that he would endeavour to be good, even as much for hers as for his own sake."

As soon as Hooker was perfectly recovered from his sickness, he went on foot with an Oxford companion and friend to visit his good mother at Exeter. He took Salisbury on his way, purposely to pay his respects to his kind patron, the Bishop, who made Hooker and his companion dine with him at his own table. At parting, the Bishop gave his *protégé* kind counsel and his benediction.

Scarcely, however, was Hooker gone when the Bishop called to mind his own negligence in not inquiring into Hooker's pecuniary wants. A servant accordingly was at once despatched, who brought Hooker back to the Bishop, who "said to him, 'Richard, I sent for you back to lend you a horse which hath carried me many a mile, and I thank God, with much ease'; and presently delivered into his hand a walking-staff, with which he professed he had travelled through many parts of Germany. And he said, 'Richard, I do not give, but lend you my horse; be sure you be honest, and bring my horse back to me at your return this way to Oxford. And I do now give you ten groats to bear your charges to Exeter, and here are ten groats more, which I charge you to deliver to your mother, and tell her I send her a Bishop's benediction with it, and beg the continuance of her prayers for me. And if you bring my horse back to me, I will give you ten groats more, to carry you on foot to the college; and so God bless you."

Very soon after this, on 21st September 1571, Bishop Jewel passed to his eternal rest, deplored by none more deeply than Hooker, who was not long left without a portion and a provision, by the blessing of God. Dr. Cole told him to go on cheerfully with his studies, assuring him that he should want neither food nor raiment.

It so happened that Bishop Jewel some months before his decease had strongly recommended Hooker to the favourable notice of his friend, Dr. Sandys, Bishop of London, and afterwards Archbishop of York, as a youth of extraordinary gifts and of the most exemplary religious and moral character. This induced Bishop Sandys to select Hooker as a tutor for his own son Edwin, whom he was sending to Corpus Christi College, Oxford, where Hooker himself was a student. "I will have a tutor," wrote the Bishop, "for my son that shall teach him learning by instruction, and virtue by example; and my greatest care shall be of the last; and, God willing, this Richard Hooker shall be the man unto whom I will commit my Edwin." This confidence on the part of the Bishop in Hooker is all the more remarkable on account of the fact that Hooker and the Bishop's son were both very young and of about the same age.

Hooker's University career was one of remarkable distinction. He was now nineteen years of age, and had spent five years in the University, and by his unwearied diligence and his transcendent talents had won a name for "perfection in all the learned languages," and for a most surprising amount of theological learning. Nor was he less remarkable for the purity and beauty of his character as a Christian. This "divine charm," as Walton tells us, "begot an early reverence for his person, even from those that at other times and in other companies took a liberty to cast off that strictness of behaviour and discourse required in a collegiate life. And when he took any liberty to be pleasant, his wit was never blemished with scoffing, or the utterance of any conceit that bordered upon or might beget a thought of looseness in his hearers. Thus mild, thus innocent and exemplary, was his behaviour in his college; and thus this good man continued till his death, still increasing in learning, in patience and piety."

In addition to Edwin Sandys as a pupil, Hooker had George Cranmer, nephew of the great Protestant martyr, Archbishop Cranmer. Between the tutor and the two pupils there existed the closest and the most endearing friendship, founded upon the religious principles they held in common, and upon a similarity of taste. This friendship is well described by Walton as beginning "in youth and in a university, free from self-ends, which the friendships of age usually are not; and in this sweet, this blessed, this spiritual amity they went on for many years; and, as the holy prophet saith, so 'they took sweet counsel together, and walked in the house of God as friends.'"

In 1576, 23rd February, Hooker took his degree as Inceptor of Arts at Oxford, which corresponds to the more modern Bachelor of Arts, and in the next year he proceeded to his Master's degree. He was soon afterwards chosen a Fellow of his college. In 1579, when the Regius Professor of Hebrew was seized with a distemper of the brain, and rendered incapable of discharging his public duties as a lecturer in Hebrew to the University, the authorities of Oxford turned at once to Hooker, notwithstanding his youthfulness, as by far the most competent Hebrew scholar to supply the place of the Regius Professor during this emergency. Scarcely was Hooker ordained when he was selected by Dr. John Elmer, or Aylmer, then Bishop of London, to preach at St. Paul's Cross.

Hooker's preachership at St. Paul's Cross (1582) was a turning-point in his domestic life, for it was on this occasion he met his future wife. On arriving in London from Oxford, to preach his sermon at St. Paul's Cross, he was lodged, according to the custom on all such occasions, at "The Shunamite's House" (as it was called), where provision was made for the preacher two days before and one day after the sermon. To this house, then kept by Mrs. Churchman, wife of a draper in Watling Street, came Hooker, "wet, weary, and weather-beaten," suffering so severely from a cold that he was very much afraid he would not be able to preach his sermon on the day required. But, as Walton tells us, "a warm bed, and rest, and drink proper for a cold, given him by Mrs. Churchman, and her diligent attendance added unto it, enabled him to perform the office of the day."

So grateful was Hooker to Mrs. Churchman for her tender and assiduous care of him in his illness, that, according to Walton, "he thought himself bound in conscience to believe all that she said, so that the good man came to be persuaded by her that 'he was a man of a tender constitution'; and that 'it was best for him to have a wife, that might prove a nurse to him; such an one as might both prolong his life and make it more comfortable; and such an one she could and would provide for him, if he thought fit to marry.' And he, not considering that 'the children of this world are wiser in their generation than the children of light,' but, like a true Nathanael, fearing no guile, because he meant none, did give her such a power as Eleazar was trusted with (you may read it in the Book of Genesis) when he was sent to choose a wife for Isaac; for even so he trusted her to choose for him, promising upon a fair summons to return to London and accept her choice; and he did so in that or about the year following. Now the wife provided for him was her daughter Joan, who brought him neither beauty nor portion; and for her conditions, they were too like that wife's which is by Solomon compared to 'a dripping house'; so that he had no reason to 'rejoice in the wife of his youth,' but too just cause to say with the holy prophet, 'Woe is me, that I am constrained to have my habitation in the tents of Kedar!'"

After his marriage Hooker was presented, 9th December 1584, to the Rectory of Drayton Beauchamp in Buckinghamshire. The change does not appear to have been a very happy one, removed as he was, in the words of his quaint biographer, "from a garden of piety, of pleasure, and of peace, and a sweet conversation, into the thorny wilderness of a busy world, where he behaved himself so as to give no occasion of evil, but (as St. Paul adviseth a minister of God) 'in much patience, in afflictions, in anguishes, in necessities, in poverty,' and no doubt in 'long-suffering,' yet troubling no man with his own discontents and wants." In the following year Mr. Edwin Sandys and Mr. George Cranmer, his old pupils, undertook a special pilgrimage of love to Drayton, to see their former much-respected tutor, whom they found in a field reading the *Odes* of Horace, one of his favourite classical authors, and tending sheep during the absence of a farm-servant who had gone home to dine and to assist his wife in some necessary household work.

When the servant returned and released Hooker, he proceeded with his beloved pupils to the Parsonage, where he was at once "commanded by his wife to rock the cradle," which he did with evident pleasure. This picture of Hooker's domestic life reminds us of a similar scene in the life of another gentle saint and scholar, Melanchthon, who was seen by one of his friends with one hand rocking the cradle of his child and with the other holding a book.

When his old pupils parted from Hooker they by no means disguised the profound pity they felt for his deplorable circumstances. Mr. George Cranmer even went so far as to say, "Good tutor, I am sorry your lot is fallen in no better ground as to your parsonage, and more sorry that your wife proves not a more comfortable companion after you have wearied yourself in your restless studies." To whom the good man replied, "My dear George, if saints have usually a double share in the miseries of this life, I, that am none, ought not to repine at what my wise Creator hath appointed for me; but labour (as indeed I do daily) to submit mine to His will, and possess my soul in patience and peace."

When Edwin Sandys returned to London, he made his father, who was then Archbishop of York, fully acquainted with his old tutor's sad condition, and urgently pleaded for his removal to some benefice that might secure him a quieter and more comfortable subsistence. This the Archbishop, who cherished an affectionate regard for Hooker, most willingly promised to do. Not long after his promise, the Archbishop obtained for Hooker the Mastership of the Temple. Though this secured him a complete emancipation from a host of cares and anxieties, and brought with it the advantage of better and more congenial society, as well as more liberal stipend, Hooker was very unwilling to leave his country parish, where he had won many hearts, and where his example of a holy, gentle, Christian life was not without its appropriate fruits. It was accordingly with difficulty that Hooker was persuaded by Archbishop Sandys to accept the Mastership.

In this new and responsible position, on which he entered 17th March 1585, in the thirty-fourth year of his age, Hooker fully justified the great expectations occasioned by his appointment, as well as the appointment itself. In all his removes, he was (to use Walton's quaint language) "like the ark, which left a blessing upon the place where it rested, and in all his employment was like Jehoiada, that did good unto Israel." The unfailing sweetness and gentleness of Hooker's character never showed to greater advantage than in his controversial sermons at the Temple, in defence of the rites and ceremonies of the Church of England, against the attacks of the afternoon preacher, Rev. Walter Travers, his Presbyterian colleague. As the witty Fuller quaintly puts it, "The pulpit (at the Temple) spake pure Canterbury in the morning and pure Geneva in the afternoon." Travers was a divine who to considerable learning and a holy life added the courage of his convictions. These controversial sermons were conspicuous for the absence of all personality and all bitterness, each preacher being anxious only to demonstrate the truth of his own particular views.

Nothing was dearer to the heart of Hooker than the desirability of peace and unity between "Puritans" and "Prelatists," and the whole tone and spirit in which he conducted his ever-memorable controversy in defence of the Established Church is in keeping with his words, "for more comfort it were for us (so small is the joy we take in these strifes) to be joined with you in bonds of indissoluble love and amity, to live as if our persons being many, our souls were but one, rather than in such dismembered sort to spend our few and wretched days in a tedious persecuting of wearisome contentions." The very purpose and aim of Hooker's masterpiece, the *Ecclesiastical Polity*, was, as he declared, "an earnest, longing desire to see things brought to a peaceful end," and every page of this great work reflects more or less the kindly, gentle, brotherly feeling he invariably entertained towards those who dissented from his ecclesiastical views.

Hooker's sermons at the Temple were very popular, full as they were of thought and learning, and written in a stately and majestic style which gained the admiration of the most fastidious scholars. Not only the young students of the Temple, but the gravest Benchers, such as Sir Edward Coke, and the most distinguished men of the day, eagerly attended Hooker's discourses, and were in the habit of taking down notes of his wise and weighty words. The burden of controversy, however, that was thrown upon him was more than he could bear, and accordingly he appealed most piteously to the Archbishop of Canterbury to remove him from the Temple to some quieter sphere of duty, in a letter which has a special interest as being not merely the pledge and promise of his great work on *Ecclesiastical Polity*, but as an evidence of his constitutional hatred of all controversy, and of his genuine love and charity towards all denominations in the Christian Church.

Hooker's appeal to the Archbishop was not without the desired effect, for very soon afterwards His Grace of Canterbury presented him to the Rectory of Boscombe, in the Diocese of Sarum. In the same year, 1591, Hooker was made sub-dean of Salisbury Cathedral. It was in his quiet parsonage at Boscombe that he completed four of his eight proposed books on *The Laws of Ecclesiastical Polity.* Three years afterwards the Queen showed her regard for Hooker by presenting him to the valuable Rectory of Bourne, or Bishopsbourne, in Kent, three miles from Canterbury, as the successor of Dr. Radman, who was appointed to the Bishopric of Norwich. Here Hooker continued to discharge his pastoral duties until his death wrung all hearts; living a holy and gentle life among his parishioners, and devoting his spare hours to the completion of his great work.

The Bourne parsonage was often visited by pilgrims and scholars from all parts of England, who went to see the man whose first instalment of the *Ecclesiastical Polity* had won the admiration of the most learned men of Europe, and whose holy and devoted life as a pastor was a living lesson and a rebuke to some of the clergy, and a wonder to all. Walton adds some details of a personal character, which are well worth quoting. "His books, and the innocency and sanctity of his life, became so remarkable, that many turned out of the road, and others (scholars especially) went purposely to see the man whose life and learning were so much admired; and, alas! as our Saviour said of St. John Baptist, 'What went they out to see? A man clothed in purple and fine linen?' No, indeed, but an obscure, harmless man;

a man in poor clothes, his loins usually girt in a coarse gown, or canonical coat, of a mean stature, and stooping, and yet more lowly in the thoughts of his soul; his body worn out not with age, but study and holy mortifications; his face full of heat-pimples, begot by his inactivity and sedentary life."

"And," continues Walton, "to this true character of his person let me add this of his disposition and behaviour: God and nature blest him with so blessed a bashfulness, that as in his younger days his pupils might easily look him out of countenance, so neither then nor in his age did he ever willingly look any man in the face; and was of so mild and humble a nature, that his poor parish-clerk and he did never talk but with both their hats on, or both off, at the same time, and to this may be added, that though he was not purblind, yet he was short- or weak-sighted, and where he fixed his eyes at the beginning of his sermon, there they continued till it was ended; and the reader has the liberty to believe that his modesty and dim sight were some of the reasons why he trusted Mrs. Churchman to choose his wife."

Hooker's custom at Bishopsbourne was to preach every Sunday, and to catechise in the afternoons, his main object being, in preaching and catechising, to ground his people in the fundamental doctrines and duties of the Christian faith. His sermons were short, pointed, and pithy, and uttered with a grave zeal and humble voice. His style was extremely simple, full of apt illustrations, avoiding all hard words and needless distinctions and sub-distinctions, and intended to be on a level with the capacities and condition of his flock. "He may be said as a preacher," writes Fuller, "to have made good music with his fiddle, and stood alone without any rosin, having neither pronunciation nor gesture to grace his matter."

The sick and the poor were special objects of Hooker's solicitude and ministration. He made inquiries to find out who were suffering and who were in trouble of any kind. He often visited them, and liberally ministered to their special necessities, and prayed with them and for them. His kindly and constant interventions as a peacemaker were especially blessed, and most successful in their results. He set his heart to heal every family quarrel, and to prevent every threatened lawsuit. He urged his parishioners to forget and to forgive wrongs and injuries, to bear one another's burdens and infirmities, to live in love, because, as St. John says, "He that liveth in love liveth in God; for God is love."

But Hooker's holiness of life and devotion to duty did not protect him against the malice of unprincipled detractors, who sought to injure his reputation by a false accusation. The precise nature of the charge and the particular source of it are not fully brought out by any of Hooker's biographers. It is, however, beyond all doubt that a grave charge was made, and that Hooker suffered the keenest of anguish while he lay under it, and that his entire innocence was established by the persistent and kind intervention of his old pupils, Edwin Sandys and George Cranmer, who had the matter carefully investigated and brought home the slander to its true source. Hooker's words, on hearing the result of the investigation, were thoroughly characteristic. "The Lord forgive them," he said; "and the Lord bless you for this comfortable news. Now I have a just occasion to say with Solomon, 'Friends are born for the days of adversity,' and such you have proved to me."

When Hooker's slanderers were condemned to penalties for their malicious accusations, he exerted himself to the utmost to secure the remission of their punishment. His best friends considered that he was defeating the highest ends of public justice in thus delivering his slanderers from the consequences of their own crimes ; but he vindicated his action on the ground that it was his duty as a follower of Christ to do good to them that had persecuted him.

At the comparatively early age of forty-six Hooker succumbed to an attack of sickness, occasioned by a cold taken on his passage by water between London and Gravesend. During his long illness he was visited daily by his good friend Dr. Saravia, who was "a great comfort to him." The Rev. Hadrian Saravia, one of the prebends of Canterbury, was a foreigner, who had been a pastor in Holland. Hooker told his friend that "he did not beg a long life from God for any other reason than to live to finish his three remaining Books of *Polity*, and then, Lord, let Thy servant depart in peace." Walton asserts that Hooker "hastened his own death by hastening to give life to his books." During the fatal illness his parsonage was robbed, and when he heard of it, his only question was, "Are my books and written papers safe ?" and when he came to learn that they were all safe, he replied, "Then it matters not, for no other loss can trouble me."

The day before his death the Lord's Supper was administered to Hooker by his friend Dr. Saravia. Early next morning Dr. Saravia found his dying friend very weak, and deep in contemplation. This led him to inquire into the thoughts that were occupying the mind of the dying saint, who replied, "That he was meditating the number and nature of angels, and their blessed obedience and order, without which peace could not be in heaven; and oh, that it might be so on earth!" After which words he said, "I have lived to see this world is made up of perturbations, and have been long preparing to leave it, and gathering comfort for the dreadful hour of making my account with God, which I now apprehend to be near; and though I have by His grace loved Him in my youth, and feared Him in mine age, and laboured to have a conscience void of offence to Him, and to all men, yet if Thou, O Lord, be extreme to mark what I have done amiss, who can abide it? And therefore where I have failed, Lord, show mercy to me, for I plead not my righteousness, but the forgiveness of my unrighteousness, for His merits who died to purchase pardon for penitent sinners; and since I owe Thee a death, Lord, let it not be terrible, and then take Thine own time, I submit to it. Let not mine, O Lord, but let Thy will be done!" With which expression he fell into a dangerous slumber—dangerous as to his recovery; yet recover he did, but it was only to speak these few words: "Good Doctor, God hath heard my daily petitions, for I am at peace with all men, and He is at peace with me; and from that blessed assurance I feel that inward joy which this world can neither give nor take from me: my conscience beareth me this witness, and this witness makes the thoughts of death joyful. I could wish to do the Church more service, but cannot hope it, for my days are past, as a shadow that returns not." More he would have spoken, but his spirits failed him; and after a short conflict betwixt nature and death, a quiet sigh put a period to his breath. He died in November 1600.

The mortal remains of the saintly Hooker rest in the graveyard of his own beloved church at Bourne. His monument was erected by his friend Sir William

Cowper, in Bourne Church, with a suitable inscription in Latin.

Hooker is called by Hallam "the finest as well as the most philosophical writer of the Elizabethan period." All his writings, but more especially his masterpiece, *The Laws of Ecclesiastical Polity*, are more the works of a Christian philosopher than of a dogmatic theologian. This great work is professedly a vindication of the government of the Church of England as established, against objectors, whether on the Puritan or the Popish side. The author devotes his first two books to a preliminary discussion of the fundamental principles involved, and sets forth a philosophical account of law in general, in its relations to the Deity and His operations, to the material and spiritual universe, to civil and ecclesiastical societies, and to the ways in which law can be made known to man.

Hooker's own estimate of law is well worth reproduction. He tells us, "Of law, there can be no less acknowledged than that her seat is the bosom of God, her voice the harmony of the world. All things in heaven and earth do her homage, the very least as feeling her care, and the greatest as not exempted from her power. Both angels and men and creatures of what condition soever, though each in different sort and manner, yet all with uniform consent admiring her as the mother of their peace and joy."

According to Hooker, the laws of created beings, and of man conspicuously, imply that, as capable of progress, he is impelled by desire, directed by reason. The sentences which reason giveth are some more, some less general. The knowledge of what man is in himself, and in relation to other beings, is the mother of the principles of the law of nature for human actions. The laws of the commonwealth are orders agreed on, touching living in society. All civil government arises from agreement between men. Nature requires some kind of government, but leaves the choice open as to which kind each shall be. Laws not only teach what is good, but exert a constraining force. The authority of the ruler comes either from a commission derived directly from God, or from the consent of the governed. This consent is explicit or implied. Positive are twofold: those which establish some duty to which men are bound by the law of reason; or else those which make that a duty which was not so before, *i.e.* they are mixed or human. The third description of laws is that which holds between bodies politic, *i.e.* laws of nations.

Hooker further tells us that the good of man is threefold: sensual, intellectual, and spiritual or divine. The last comes in the way of reward to perfect obedience. Man having failed of this by the way of nature, God has provided a way that is supernatural, on condition of faith, which includes hope and charity. On this point let us hear the very words of Hooker in his *Discourse of Justification*:—

"Our salvation is by Christ alone; therefore, howsoever or whatsoever we add unto Christ in the matter of salvation, we overthrow Christ. . . . It is a childish cavil wherewith, in the matter of justification, our adversaries exclaim that we tread all Christian virtues under our feet, and require nothing in Christians but faith, because we teach that 'faith alone justifies.' Whereas by this speech we never meant to exclude either Hope or Charity from being always joined as inseparable mates with Faith in the man that is justified; or Works from being added as necessary duties, required at the hands of every justified man; but to show that Faith is the only hand which putteth on Christ unto justification; and Christ the only garment which, being so put on, covereth the shame of our defiled natures, hideth the imperfection of our works, preserveth us blameless in the sight of God, before whom otherwise the weakness of our faith were cause sufficient to make us culpable, yea, to shut us from the kingdom of heaven, where nothing that is not absolute can enter."

And again, concerning the teaching that salvation is by Christ alone through faith, Hooker, in the same Discourse, says: "This importeth that we have redemption, remission of sins through His blood, health by His stripes, justice by Him; that He doth sanctify His Church, and make it glorious to Himself; that entrance into joy shall be given us by Him; yea, all things by Him alone. Howbeit, not so by Him alone as if in us to our vocation the hearing of the Gospel, to our justification Faith, to our sanctification the fruits of the Spirit, to our entrance into rest, perseverance in hope, in faith, in holiness, were not necessary."

The doctrinal errors of the Church of Rome are exposed by Hooker with force of argument, learning, and clearness, but without any violence or bitterness. Pope Clement VIII., on reading that portion of Hooker's *Ecclesiastical Polity* which discussed the nature and application of God's material and spiritual laws, is said to have exclaimed, "There is no learning, that the man hath not searched into, nothing too hard for his understanding; the man indeed deserves the name of an author, his works will get reverence by age, for there is in them such seeds of eternity, that if the rest should be like this, they shall last till the last fire shall consume all human learning."

Hooker, along with the greatest divines of the Church of England, regarded the Papacy as the Antichrist of New Testament prophecy. He compared Popery with the system of Jeroboam, "the son of Nebat, who made Israel to sin." "Christ hath said in the sixteenth chapter of St. Matthew's Gospel, to Simon, the son of Jonas, 'I say to thee, Thou art Peter.' Hence an opinion is held in the world, that the Pope is universal head of all churches. Yet Jesus said not, The Pope is universal head of all churches; but *Tu es Petrus*, 'Thou art Peter.' Howbeit, as Jeroboam, the son of Nebat, the servant of Solomon, rose up and rebelled against his lord, and there were gathered unto him vain men and wicked, which made themselves strong against Rehoboam, the son of Solomon, because Rehoboam was but a child and tender-hearted, and could not resist them, so the son of perdition and man of sin (being not able to brook the words of our Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ, which forbade His disciples to be like princes of nations: 'They bear rule that are called gracious, it shall not be so with you') hath risen up and rebelled against his Lord."[1]

On the Romish doctrine of penance and priestly absolution, Hooker speaks in no ambiguous terms. "It is not[2] to be marvelled that so great a difference appeareth between the doctrine of Rome and ours, when we teach repentance. They imply in the name of repentance much more than we do. We stand chiefly upon the true inward conversion of the heart; they more upon works of external show. We teach, above all things, that repentance which is one and the same, from the beginning to the world's end; they a sacramental penance, of their own devising and shaping. We labour to instruct men in such sort, that every soul which is wounded with sin may learn the way how to cure itself; they clean contrary, would make all sores seem incurable, unless the priest have a hand in them."

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[1] Sermon I. on St. Jude, § 15.

[2] *Ecclesiastical Polity*, book vi. c. vi.

The Popish doctrine of meritorious good works is met by Hooker by the following argument against its defence by Sir Thomas More:—"Their doctrine, as he (Sir Thomas More) thought, maketh the works of man rewardable in the world to come through the goodness of God, whom it pleaseth to set so high a price upon so poor a thing; and ours, that a man doth receive that eternal and high reward, not for his own works', but for his faith's sake, by which he worketh; whereas in truth our doctrine is no other than that which we have learned at the feet of Christ, namely, that God doth justify the believing man, yet not for the worthiness of his belief, but for His worthiness which is believed."[1]

Hooker, preaching on prayer, deals thus with the Romish doctrine of invocation of saints and angels. "Against invocation of any other than God alone, if all arguments else should fail, the number whereof is both great and forcible, yet this very bar and single challenge might suffice, that whereas God hath in Scripture delivered us so many patterns for imitation when we pray, yea, framed ready to our hands in a manner all, for suits and supplications which our condition of life on earth may at any time need, there is not one, no not one, to be found directed unto angels, saints, or any, saving God alone. So that, if in such cases as this we hold it safest to be led by the best examples that have gone before, when we see what Noah, what Abraham, what Moses, what David, what Daniel and the rest did, what form of prayer Christ Himself likewise taught His Church, and what His blessed apostles did practise, who can doubt but the way for us to pray so as we may undoubtedly be accepted, is by conforming our prayers to theirs, whose supplications we know were acceptable?"[1]

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[1] *Discourse of Justification*, § 33.

The Protestant doctrine of the sufficiency of Holy Scripture as a rule of faith against the Romish doctrine of the twofold rule of faith in Scripture and tradition is thus maintained by Hooker[2]—"Now forasmuch as there hath been reason alleged sufficient to conclude that all things necessary unto salvation must be made known, and that God Himself hath therefore revealed His will, because otherwise men could not have known so much as is necessary; His surceasing to speak to the world, since the publishing of the Gospel of Jesus Christ and the delivery of the same in writing, is unto us a manifest token that the way of salvation is now sufficiently opened, and that we need no other means for our full instruction than God hath already furnished us withal." "There is in Scripture, therefore, no defect but that any man, what place or dwelling soever he hold in the Church of God, may have thereby the light of his natural understanding so perfected, that the one being relieved by the other, there can want no part of needful instruction unto any good work which God Himself requireth, be it natural or supernatural, belonging simply unto men as men, or unto men as they are united in whatsoever kind of society. It sufficeth, therefore, that nature and Scripture do serve in such full sort, that they both jointly, and not severally either of them, be so complete, that unto everlasting felicity we need not the knowledge of anything more than these two may easily furnish our minds with on all sides; and therefore they which add traditions, as a part of supernatural necessary truth, have not the truth, but are in error."

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[1] *Sermon on St. Matthew*, § 3.

[2] *Ecclesiastical Polity*, book i. § 14.

Hooker was the contemporary of, and to some extent of kindred genius with, the greatest writers on English literature, of Shakespeare, Spenser, and Bacon. The age that produced these writers, which have much in common, attained a literary glory which has never since been equalled, much less surpassed. This golden age of English literature was the direct and natural outcome of the Reformation, that awakened the national intellect as well as the national conscience from the long, death-like slumber of ages. The sphere of human interest was widened as it has never been widened before or since, not merely by an open Bible, but by the discovery of a new world. The impulse directly springing from the Reformation suddenly changed the whole aspect of England, and carried its literary genius at a bound to the highest perfection in prose and poetry.

For ages Popery had fettered in the chains of superstition the genius of man, and had by depriving men of the right of private judgment virtually deprived them of their intellectual vision, dealing with men's minds as the Philistines of old had dealt with Samson when they made him the blinded instrument of their will and the vassal of their supreme power. When the Reformation made men the masters of their own minds, a new motive was given to develop the powers and resources of their intellect, a new interest was supplied for the study of human character and human destiny—the life that is and the life that is to be.

Then there dawned upon the world "the beginning of a new and a truer, because a more inductive philosophy of human nature and human history," to quote the words of Green the historian, who goes on to speak of the "impulse which sprang from national triumph, from the victory over the Armada, the deliverance from Spain, the rolling away of the Catholic terror which had hung like a cloud over the hopes of the new people. With its new sense of security, its new sense of national energy and national power, the whole aspect of England suddenly changed. As yet the interest of Elizabeth's reign had been political and material; the stage had been crowded with statesmen and warriors—with Cecils and Walsinghams and Drakes. Literature had hardly found a place in the glories of the time. But from the moment when the Armada drifted back broken to Ferrol, the figures of warriors and statesmen were dwarfed by the grander figures of poets and philosophers. Amidst the throng in Elizabeth's antechamber, the noblest form is that of the singer who lays the *Faërie Queene* at her feet; or of the young lawyer who muses amid the splendours of the presence over the problems of the *Novum Organon.* The triumph at Cadiz, the conquest of Ireland, pass unheeded as we watch Hooker building up his *Ecclesiastical Polity* among the sheepfolds, or the genius of Shakespeare rising year by year into supremer grandeur."[1]

Like his contemporary, Bacon, Hooker asserted the just claims of human reason and the right of "private judgment." The *Ecclesiastical Polity* from end to end is an embodiment of this great Reformation principle, for he shows that a divine order exists, not in written revelation only, but in the moral relations of mankind, as well as the social and political institutions of man; and he claims for human reason the office of ascertaining this order; of distinguishing between what is changeable and what is unchangeable, and between what is essential and what is only expedient. Matters of ecclesiastical arrangement he included among the latter. "The Church," he says, "hath authority to establish that for an order at one time which at another time it may abolish, and in that do well. Articles touching matters of order are changeable articles; concerning doctrine not so." Hooker's fundamental conception of Church government was like Bacon's, that the good of the nation should be the basis upon which such indifferent matters should be decided. The question with both is not what is best in itself, but what is best for England. Even if foreign Reformed Churches were superior to the Church of England in their constitution, Bacon, like Hooker, condemns "the partial affectation and imitation of foreign Churches. Our Church is not now to plant. It is settled and established. It may be, in civil states a republic is a better policy than a kingdom; yet God forbid our lawful kingdom should be tied to innovations and rude alterations"; and in 1603 Bacon adopts still more pointedly Hooker's fundamental views: "I could never find but that God hath left the like liberty to the Church government as He hath done to the civil government, to be varied according to time and place and accidents, which nevertheless His high and divine providence doth order and dispose."

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[1] *History of the English People*, vol. ii. pp. 460, 461.

A large part of Hooker's great work, the *Ecclesiastical Polity*, is occupied with questions philosophical and controversial. The controversies as to Church order he was unwillingly led into, for he was a man of devout spirit and a lover of peace. We must not conclude this brief memoir without referring to the Christian tone of his works as distinct from that which is merely Ecclesiastical. The passage on justification by faith is sufficient to mark his soundness in theology. The opening pages of the Third Book of the *Polity* show that his own soul was breathing a purer and loftier atmosphere.

With regard to the style of Hooker as a writer, the judgment of Hallam is thus given :—" So stately and graceful is the march of his periods, so various the fall of his musical cadences upon the ear, so rich in images, so condensed in sentences, so grave and noble his diction, so little is there of vulgarity in his racy idiom, of pedantry in his learned phrase, that I know not whether any later writer has more admirably displayed the capacities of our language, or produced passages more worthy of comparison with the splendid monuments of antiquity."

Sir Walter Raleigh, in his *History of the World*, published 1615, is the first English writer who quotes Hooker as an authority, and gives the definition of law, with the same feeling of admiration which so many illustrious writers have since that time regarded it. The influence and authority of Hooker as a Christian philosopher has increased rather than diminished since his own day. His large and charitable views, and his moderation in presenting them, with the conspicuous absence of all bigotry and prejudice, have commended his writings to the most opposite schools of religious thought, who have found in him confirmation of their views, and quote him as an authority. No human works are free from error, and sentences can be found which are scarcely consistent with the teaching of the Reformed Churches on certain points ; but these faults, like spots on the sun, do not greatly affect the splendour of his pages.

Locke, the author of the *Human Understanding*, and the great advocate of liberty of conscience and toleration, found in Hooker the most convincing and eloquent expositor of his own principles of toleration and of the fundamental principles of all civil government. In an age memorable for the extremity to which party views in religion were carried, and for the bitterness in which they were expressed, it is Hooker's great distinction that, without any sacrifice of Christian principle, his constant aim was *moderation*, and next to it the expression of his moderate views in the language of Christian charity. He always spoke what he believed to be the truth, but he always "spake *the truth in love*."

RICHARD BAXTER

(1615–1691)

By
W. G. Blaikie, LL.D.

RICHARD BAXTER was the son of a Shropshire yeoman of the same name, and of Beatrice Adeney, of Rowton, in the same county, at which latter place he was born on 12th November 1615. His mother was the daughter of Richard Adeney, of Rowton, near High Ercall. About the time of Baxter's birth his father had been converted, mainly through the reading of the Holy Scriptures. To his instructions and influence Richard owed his first religious impressions. At a very early period he came under the power of Divine truth. A book called *Bunny's Resolution*, by a Jesuit named Parsons, corrected by Edmund Bunny, was the means of the decisive change.

The neighbouring clergy during Baxter's early years were usually both ignorant and careless, and little of any kind was to be learned from them. What Baxter knew of divine truth was gathered chiefly from books, among which Sibb's *Bruised Reed*, Perkins' *On Repentance*, *On Living and Dying Well*, and *On the Government of the Tongue*, and Culverwell's *Treatise on Faith*, were pre-eminently useful. His education was conducted in a somewhat fitful and irregular way. Ill-health and other causes deprived him of the benefits of University training. What he

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knew of Greek, Latin, and Hebrew (and it was not much), and what he acquired of logic and metaphysics, for which he had a great liking, was attained mainly through his own exertions.

At an early period he became the victim of ill-health, and during all his life he suffered from a complication of diseases that often inflicted acute and terrible suffering. His unprecedented activity indicates very forcibly what prodigious vitality of spirit he must have had, to labour as he did, in spite of such an accumulation of bodily infirmities.

In early years he was troubled with grave doubts as to his spiritual condition. His lapses into sins which were condemned by his own conscience were the main causes of his perplexity. When he came to understand how " the flesh lusteth against the spirit, and the spirit against the flesh," he was more satisfied of the genuineness of his faith. He came to see that " he who would rather leave his sin than have leave to keep it, and had rather be the most holy than have leave to be unholy, or less holy, is neither without true repentance nor the love of God."

On 10th May 1634 Baxter lost his mother. From this time his desire to be a minister of the Gospel became very strong. Hitherto, though he found little to admire in the neighbouring clergy, he had conformed to the Church ; and indeed he had at first a dislike to nonconformity. It was his becoming acquainted with some nonconformist ministers of eminent godliness, and learning that they were persecuted by the bishops, that turned his sympathies into another channel. But he had no difficulty in subscribing the Articles, nor in receiving ordination at the hands of a bishop. Accordingly, in 1638, Baxter was ordained by Thornborough, Bishop of Worcester, and received a licence to teach in the school of Dudley. After a year he removed to Bridgnorth, where he acted as assistant to the minister with considerable success. He was led at this time to examine more carefully the grounds of controversy between the Church and nonconformists, with the result that in many points he came to agree with the latter, on whose side, gradually but decidedly, and without either bigotry or bitterness, he came to stand.

Baxter's youth and early manhood extended over the reign of Charles I. The Church was still undivided ; but the Puritan portion gave it but a wavering allegiance, as their requests for reforms were so little regarded.

In 1640 the town of Kidderminster petitioned against their vicar, an ignorant and drunken fellow, and he, to compromise the matter, offered to allow sixty pounds a year for a preacher, on whom the main part of the duty of the parish would fall. The people concurring with this offer, gave an invitation to Baxter, who willingly accepted it.

It was a large and necessitous field ; the congregation was numerous, but rude and ignorant, and at first the faithfulness of Baxter raised up enemies against him. His doctrines were misrepresented, and sometimes atrocious charges were brought against his character. Besides preaching, he held meetings in his house both with young and old, for going over the sermon, removing difficulties, and making fuller explanations. Two days every week were devoted to family catechising and conference. With each family he spent about an hour, not allowing any stranger to be present, in order that there might be no hindrance to the frank expression of his people's views. Every first Wednesday of the month he had a meeting for parish discipline ; every first Thursday the neighbouring ministers met for prayer and conference. But the details of Baxter's ministry at Kidderminster will be given more suitably in connection with the second and longer ministry which he exercised in the place. Two years after his first settlement there as lecturer he was obliged to withdraw. In connection with a Parliamentary order for defacing images of the Trinity in churches and removing crucifixes, for which Baxter was held to be accountable, a violent attack was made on his life and on that of a churchwarden. Baxter had not yet had time to live down calumny and make his true character to be universally known and respected. It was judged best, therefore, that he should retire for a time from Kidderminster, and find employment in some other sphere. An attempt, a few weeks afterwards, to resume work in Kidderminster had such ill success that Baxter was fully persuaded that a change was necessary.

The breach with King Charles I. had become so serious that an army against him was in the field. Baxter, when he left Kidderminster penniless, hardly knew where to turn, but having a friend at Coventry, he went to spend a few weeks with him. While at Coventry he was asked to preach to the soldiers of the Parliamentary army stationed there, and, as he says, the offer suited well to his necessities. But he resolved that he would not be chaplain to a regiment nor accept a commission; he merely preached once a week to the soldiers and once to the people, taking nothing from either but what sufficed for food. This continued for about two years, but at the end of that time Baxter got a more specific invitation to be chaplain to the troops. In accepting this invitation it was not easy for him to get over the fact that, in taking the oath of allegiance, he had sworn to be faithful to the King and his heirs. But it was at this time the common opinion in the army that the Parliament was faithful to the

King, having no other desire than to restrain him from unconstitutional exercises of his authority. So Baxter decided to go among them. " As soon as I came to the army," he says, " Oliver Cromwell coolly bade me welcome, and never spoke one word to me more while I was there."

Baxter set himself, he tells us, to find out the errors and corruptions of the soldiers, and to discourse and dispute them out of their mistakes, both religious and political. He found that the spirit of disputation, both on political and religious questions, was very rampant. His account of the army is by no means flattering, and conveys on the whole an unpleasant impression of the kind of religion that prevailed in it. One would suppose from it that there was much more of vain-glorious disputatiousness among those who made a profession of religion than of the faith that works by love and purifies the heart. It is supposed by some that his account was coloured by disappointment, from his not being more successful in his dealings with the men of this class that he came in contact with. Even of Cromwell, Baxter had a very qualified opinion ; he found him not disposed to dispute with him, and much more fond of making discourses of his own on free grace than of listening to arguments against Antinomianism or Anabaptism.

If it be thought that, because Baxter devoted so much energy in the army to controverted subjects, the tone of his own spirit must have been cold and carnal, that notion is put to flight by the fact that at the end of this period, after a severe illness, the first and perhaps the most spiritual of his books was written, *The Saint's Everlasting Rest.* " While I was in health," he says, " I had not the least thought of writing books, or of serving God in any more public way than preaching; but when I was weakened by great bleeding, and left solitary in my chamber at Sir John Cook's, in Derbyshire, without any acquaintance but my servant about me, and was sentenced to death by the physicians, I began to contemplate more seriously on the everlasting rest, which I apprehended myself to be just on the borders of. That my thoughts might not too much scatter in my meditation, I began to write something on that subject, intending but the quantity of a sermon or two; but being continued long in weakness, where I had no books and no better employment, I followed it on till it was enlarged to the bulk in which it is published."

Except a Bible and a Concordance, Baxter had not a single book to help him in writing *The Saint's Rest.* Afterwards he added references in the margin. "The transcript of the heart," as he remarks, "hath the greatest force on the hearts of others." It was the truth that had been so useful and so acceptable in his own time of need that he passed on to others, with the image and superscription of his own experience. Amongst the books that have come from uninspired pens it has been one of the most useful.

The fourteen years which succeeded, from the age of thirty-one to forty-five, may be called the golden period of Baxter's life. While he was lying sick and feeble from an attack of hemorrhage, after leaving the army, the people of Kidderminster had renewed the fight with their old vicar and his curate. Again they looked to Baxter, and the living having been sequestrated, they offered it to him. But Baxter would hear of nothing of the kind. He had insuperable scruples about what was called the "*et cetera* oath." All that he was willing to do was to resume the lectureship he had held before, for which he would expect a stipend of a hundred pounds. In point of fact, he did not get more than eighty or ninety pounds, and a few rooms to dwell in at the top of another man's house.

In his settlement at Kidderminster he showed the same disinterestedness which afterwards appeared in his refusing a bishopric. At a subsequent time Baxter was willing to continue his work at Kidderminister for nothing, if he had only been permitted to remain. While, however, Baxter did not desire to commit himself to the Church more closely than was necessary for enabling him to exercise his ministry, it must ever be remembered that both now and during the rest of his life he was unswerving in his personal loyalty to the King. The execution of the King he always regarded as a grievous crime ; and notwithstanding all that was repulsive in his son, and all that he himself and his brethren suffered at the Restoration, his allegiance to Charles II. could never be reasonably challenged.

Baxter's account of his ministry at Kidderminster is a most remarkable document. His methods of work were very characteristic. After the war, he preached but once on the Lord's day and once every Thursday, besides occasional sermons. But a sermon in those days was like a little book. Mention has already been made of the meetings that were held at his house to go over the sermon, and of the two days spent by him and his assistant in catechising the people. Having some knowledge of medicine, and as there was at first no physician in Kidderminster, he had to look after the sick in more ways than one, and sometimes as many as twenty would be at his door at once ; but for this service he never took a penny. All these labours, however, he tells us, were but his recreation, and, as it were, the work of his spare hours ; his *writings* were his chief daily labours.

But his bodily weakness contracted sadly the time which he was able to give to these. Owing to infirmity, he could not get up before seven in the morning, and afterwards not till much later; he needed an hour for dressing, an hour for walking before dinner, and the same before supper; and after supper he could rarely study. Yet there never was a year of Baxter's life, after he began to publish, but he gave to the world some treatise or treatises, often very elaborate works, and full of learning. The total list of his publications amount to a hundred and sixty-eight, being on an average about four per annum for the fifty-two years of his literary activity.

His labours were abundantly appreciated. The brunt of opposition was broken during his first ministry; ever after he found the people tractable and unprejudiced. In the beginning of his ministry he was wont to keep a list of conversions; but soon the list exceeded his ability to count. Five galleries had to be added to the church to accommodate the increasing congregation. The private meetings, too, were all full. "On the Lord's day there was no disorder to be seen in the streets; but you might hear a hundred families singing psalms and repeating sermons as you passed through them. In a word, when I came thither first there was about one family in a street that worshipped God and called on His name, and when I came away there were some streets in which there was not one poor family in the side that did not do so. And in those families that were the worst, being inns and alehouses, usually some person in each house did seem to be religious."

His personal dealings with families were also very successful. Few went away without tears, or seemingly serious promises for a godly life. Some of the poor people became excellent theologians, and many of them were very able in prayer. Their lives, too, corresponded to their professions. "The professors of serious godliness were generally of very humble minds and carriage; of meek and quiet behaviour unto others, and of blamelessness and innocency in their conversation." Round about Kidderminster, too, the blessings spread. When he preached at some of the neighbouring towns, the people not only crowded the churches, but hung on the windows and the leads in the intensity of their desire to hear.

Baxter had his own way of accounting for all this success. First, such preaching and such methods were new to the people. Then, being himself in the vigour of his spirits, having naturally a familiar moving voice, and yet speaking in the consciousness of his infirmity as a dying man to dying men, he riveted their attention and arrested their hearts. The success of his party in the war gave him a more advantageous position, as people are wont to give more attention to the supporters of a winning cause. His own character too helped his preaching. He tells us that he was greatly aided by the zeal and diligence of the godly people, and by their holy, humble, blameless lives. The unity and concord of the brethren was a further help. His medical practice among the poor; the books he wrote; his being unmarried, so that he could take his people to his heart as his children, so to speak; his not meddling with public business; and his having nothing to do with tithes, are all enumerated by him as secondary causes that contributed to his success. Perhaps in this enumeration he hardly lays stress enough on what under God must have been the great cause, namely, the purity, sincerity, and ardour of his own convictions, and the whole-hearted simplicity with which he poured them out to his people.

The effects of his labours at Kidderminster were seen long after he left the place, and even after the termination of his life. In an edition of *The Saint's Rest* in 1759, almost a century after he left Kidderminster, it was said that the religious spirit which he introduced was yet to be traced in some degree in the town and neighbourhood. Of a life retaining its fragrance and its influence so long it cannot be doubted that it was in closest and most vital contact with the Son of God.

Baxter occupied a peculiar position in relation to the Commonwealth and its heads. While he agreed in the main with the Parliamentary party in the steps they took for securing the liberties of the country, even when opposition had to be offered to the King, his loyalty to the King's person remained unshaken, and the King's execution appeared to him a great national crime.

Though he had once taken the Covenant, Baxter came to disapprove of it, as a snare to conscience and a premium on insincerity. So also he disliked the "Engagement" which the Independents promoted. In regard to Cromwell, he could not but be pleased with his intense love of the Gospel and desire to see the realm of Great Britain governed according to the law of Christ. But he believed that, notwithstanding all his godly sympathies, and perhaps under the influence of hope that he might the better advance the Gospel, Cromwell was influenced by an ambition that would not rest till the whole government of the country was brought into his own hands. Personally, Baxter looked on Cromwell as a usurper. Yet he could not but acknowledge it as a marvellous fact that under the government of a usurper he and other servants of the Lord had enjoyed unbounded freedom in preaching the Gospel, and had seen the Divine blessing descend almost visibly upon their labours ; while a legitimate sovereign had driven them from their pulpits and parishes as nuisances not to be tolerated, and set an example of personal lawlessness and debauchery which served only to corrupt and degrade the nation.

Baxter was constantly endeavouring to conciliate Church parties and unite them into one. Though he held Presbyterianism to be the mode of church government which was most in accordance with the Word of God, he was by no means an extreme Presbyterian, as many were in his time. In some respects he differed from the Presbyterians, and especially in these two : he disliked their intolerance, and he did not accept their view of the office of ruling elder. The Presbyterians wished to compel men to uniformity ; Baxter had no confidence in such compulsion. The truth, in his view, could prevail only by its own inward victories ; it was no service to Christ to compel men to accept it. Baxter would have been willing to accept a form of church government which borrowed features from Episcopacy on the one hand or from Independency on the other. He was willing, with Archbishop Usher, to have a government in which bishops should exercise functions corresponding to those of the superintendent in the early Reformed Scotch Church, though far below those of the prelate. We shall have by and by to notice his efforts in this direction after the Restoration. All his life Baxter endeavoured to reconcile and unite, wherever he thought such a course legitimate and possible ; and for this reason he was less liked by the leaders of parties than he would have been had he been the rigorous champion of some one method.

The cordiality with which all classes united in welcoming Charles II. was very remarkable. The Puritan section of the nation expected very different treatment from that which they soon came to experience. They were deceived by the King's solemn promises and assurances, given only to simplify his way to the throne, and flung aside by him as soon as his purpose was gained. Some were even inclined to believe that he was now a regenerate man, for Charles, while on the Continent, had been mean enough, when Puritans were within hearing, to pretend to extraordinary fervour in his private devotions, wishing them to believe that he was a converted man. Baxter and his friends were full of hope that an ecclesiastical compromise would be effected, by means of which the various parties would be embraced in a single church.

And at first it seemed as if things were tending in that direction. The Puritans were a powerful body, and it was desirable not to offend them at first. Baxter and others were appointed chaplains to the King; and once Baxter preached before His Majesty. In an interview with him he urged his views very solemnly and powerfully in favour of liberty and of union, and besought the King not to imagine that the Puritans were actuated by want of regard for him, but solely by a regard for the highest welfare of the kingdom. The King listened very attentively, and gave a gracious answer, expressing his desire to forward all that had been laid before him, insomuch that one of the ministers present, Mr. Ash, burst into tears, and could not forbear expressing what gladness the promise of His Majesty had put into his heart.

At the King's request, proposals for settlement of the Church question, on the basis of Archbishop Usher's form of government, were drawn up by the ministers, with a view, as it was believed, to a conference with the Episcopalians. They did not indicate what they altogether approved of, but rather what they could accept, and what the other side, as they believed, could accept likewise. They were disappointed, however, in regard to the conference. After some delay the King communicated his intentions in the form of a long document called a Declaration, to which the Puritans were permitted to offer their objections. There were some encouraging things in the Declaration, but the Puritans saw little in it that could be a basis of agreement. At last a meeting was brought about, the famous Savoy Conference, between certain bishops and certain Puritans; but on the part of the bishops there was no attempt at conciliation. They defended things as they were, and it became apparent that they did not wish for union. The Savoy Conference, after much discussion, broke up without leading to any result. On the part of the Puritans, Baxter was the chief speaker, and he spoke at great length and with great explicitness. His chief opponent was Bishop Gunning, who drew him into many subtle logical disputes, in which the great practical matters at stake seemed to be forgotten.

Before the Savoy Conference, the King had offered bishoprics to Baxter and two other members of the Puritan party, Calamy and Reynolds. Baxter and his friends were of opinion that, if some such concessions as to the episcopal office as they sought were made, there was no sufficient reason why they should not accept. Personally, Baxter did not wish the office. He was full of literary employment; writing books was the chief function of his life, and he did not wish to be called from it. Besides, even then he had a foreboding that the best and godliest of the ministers would be cast out, and he did not wish to be severed from them. He saw that the bishops would have the painful duty of silencing these ministers in their dioceses, and he was afraid that even if any modification were conceded as to the bishop's office, it would be withdrawn in a short time. For himself Baxter explicitly refused. Calamy declined also, but Reynolds accepted the offer, on the understanding, as he told Baxter, that a bishop and a presbyter did not differ *ordine sed gradu*, and that he accepted the place as described in the King's declaration, and not as it stood before. The result of the Savoy Conference showed that if Baxter and Calamy had accepted, they would have been in a very false position, and Reynolds soon found that, whatever his own understanding or wish might have been, no change was really effected in the character of the office.

Having refused the bishopric of Hereford, Baxter's request for himself was simply that he might be allowed to remain at Kidderminster. The existing vicar was a man of such character that Baxter dared not ask that he should be preferred to any charge of souls; but if there were any vacant prebend or other place of competent emolument, he asked that he might be appointed to it, and that he himself might become vicar. But if there should be any insuperable barrier to that arrangement, Baxter was willing to return to Kidderminster as curate, for his sole desire was to continue his ministry among his beloved flock. Did ever such a thing happen before or since in the Church of England or anywhere else? A man in the same breath declining a bishopric and humbly craving to be allowed to serve as curate to an incapable vicar!

The Act of Uniformity came into operation in 1662, and two thousand of the best ministers of the country came out of the Church. For various reasons

Baxter had not waited to the last, but left before the fatal day, 24th August 1662. Of him it could hardly be said that he was ejected from his living, for he was but a lecturer, and the ninety pounds a year he had from the old vicar was all that the Church gave him. At the same time he was incapacitated from holding even the office of curate.

Baxter's desire to continue at Kidderminster was sternly refused. The persons who instigated the refusal were Sir Ralph Clare, an old Royalist, and Dr. Morley, bishop of the diocese. Baxter offered to the vicar to do his work for nothing, but in vain. He made a last appeal to him for leave to administer the sacrament once more to his people, and preach a farewell sermon ; but that too was refused.

Thus ended the ministry of Richard Baxter in the Church of England. The work of St. Bartholomew's Day was a grievous blow to the cause of evangelical truth and life. The effects of it were felt in England for more than a hundred years. No doubt a great testimony was borne to Christian principle and Christian conscience ; it was a marvellous act of allegiance to conscience that, rather than violate it, two thousand men abandoned their means of living, under circumstances and conditions, too, that rendered it almost hopeless for them to attempt to make a livelihood in any other way. After all, it was not the mere ejection of the ministers from their livings that constituted the blow to evangelical religion, but the law that forbade their continuing to live near their flocks, or minister to them, or continue that influence which they had exercised so long with the best results. We shall see how it fared with Baxter, who removed to London, and tried there to find some field for the exercise of his ministry, but was harassed nearly the whole remainder of his life with vexatious opposition and interruptions, and even in his old age treated as an alien and an enemy.

It is hard to believe that within three weeks of St. Bartholomew's Day Baxter was married to a youthful wife. Miss Margaret Charlton, daughter of a county gentleman in the neighbourhood, had been greatly benefited by his ministry while residing with her widowed mother at Kidderminster, and, notwithstanding Baxter's known sentiments in favour of ministerial celibacy, an affection had sprung up between them, of which marriage was the natural result. This event would probably have happened sooner, but the negotiations with the King, the Savoy Conference, and other public transactions had interfered, and it was only after Baxter had been separated from his pastoral charge that the purpose was carried into effect. As his wife had a small portion, and as Baxter, from his books and otherwise, was in possession of some means, they were not confronted with that spectre of poverty which so many of the ejected ministers had to face. Still, the nineteen years they spent together was a troubled time, and but for their warm affection for each other, and enjoyment of the peace that passeth understanding, there would have been little sunshine in their wedded life.

The prohibition to exercise the ministry was carried out with great rigour and harshness. Once, when Baxter was expected with a few others at a friend's house, to pray for a dying woman, two justices of the peace came with the Parliament's serjeant-at-arms to apprehend them, but fortunately missed them. Some of the Puritans had been hoping for a relaxation of the law, but in place of this being granted, an Act was passed in June 1663, to the effect "that every person above sixteen years old, who should be present at any meeting, under colour or pretence of any exercise of religion, in other manner than is allowed by the liturgy, or practice of the Church of England, where there are five persons more than the household, shall, for the first offence by a justice of peace be recorded, and sent to jail three months till he pay five pounds; for the second offence six months till he pay ten pounds; and for the third time, being convicted by a jury, shall be banished to some of the American plantations, excepting New England or Virginia."

Baxter was mainly occupied during his first three years' residence in London with his books. He occupied himself likewise with endeavours to promote the work of John Eliot, the noble missionary to the American Indians.

At the end of 1665 things looked ill for the country. "War with the Hollanders, which yet continueth; and the driest winter, spring, and summer that ever man alive knew. . . . The plague hath seized on the famousest and most excellent city in Christendom, and at this time nearly 8300 die of all diseases in a week. . . . Oh, how is London, the place that God hath honoured with His Gospel above all places of the earth, laid low in horrors, and wasted almost to desolation by the wrath of God, whom England hath contemned!" With beautiful devotedness several of the ejected ministers of London returned to the scenes of their former labours, and preached to their flocks from the pulpits from which their successors had fled in terror. Yet in the midst of these scenes the Parliament, which had gone to Oxford to avoid the plague, was busy with an Act fitted to make the cases of the silenced ministers more intolerable than before.

Baxter himself was now at Acton, a few miles out of town, which continued for a time to be his place of abode. In 1666 another fearful calamity befell London —the fire which consumed a large part of the city. One good came out of this catastrophe. The churches being burnt, and the parish ministers gone, the nonconformists were now resolved to brave all dangers and preach till they were imprisoned. Some of the churches that were not burnt had able and earnest ministers, among whom were Dr. Stillingfleet, Dr. Tillotson, and Dr. Whichcote. Baxter regarded this as a source of satisfaction ; but the prominent men in the Church fancied themselves quite competent for the whole work of the country, and they were desirous to silence the rest. Good Lord Chief Justice Hale prepared a Bill with a conciliatory tendency, but the bishops were alarmed, and nothing was done.

Baxter's friendship with Chief Justice Hale was one of the happiest episodes in his life. His integrity, patience, and soundness as a judge were admitted by all. He was the great means of rebuilding London, judging of all disputed questions, and removing a multitude of hindrances. His style of living was plain and simple. His diligence as an author brought out books extending to four volumes in folio. His conversation on religious subjects was most interesting and edifying. Towards Baxter he showed the greatest respect, and even when he saw that the people were crowding into Baxter's house to hear him preach, Hale, instead of trying to hinder them, seemed pleased and happy.

But the clergyman of the parish was a man of very different character. He hated Baxter, and was shocked to find many of his parishioners going to his preachings. In 1670 Baxter was arraigned for holding conventicles, and thereafter committed to prison. After a time he was discharged on a technical ground. But his residence at Acton could not be continued, and he removed to Totteridge, near Barnet. The Act against conventicles had expired, so that nonconformists were hoping for more liberty in preaching ; but ere long it was renewed with more restrictive enactments than ever. But though Parliament was more severe, the King became more lenient. Through the personal interposition of His Majesty, what was called "the indulgence" came into operation in 1672, and Baxter and his friends found more liberty to preach the Gospel. Baxter returned to London, and endeavoured, as we shall see in the next section, to find a more regular sphere for his ministry.

The nine or ten years that had now elapsed since he left Kidderminster had been ill fitted for regular work. The sad condition of the ministers and congregations that had suffered on St. Bartholomew's Day was a continual source of depression. Moving about from place to place was unfavourable for writing books. The plague and the fire were additional elements of disturbance and distraction. Occasionally hope would revive that an accommodation might be brought about, whereby the more moderate of the various schools might find a place in the Church ; but all such hopes were doomed to disappointment.

Baxter's chief employment was writing books, and it is marvellous how much he accomplished. He laboured under the disadvantage, which one might have thought fatal to him as a writer, of being separated from his library. On leaving Kidderminster he had had to store his books in some old cellar, where damp and the rats made sad havoc of them ; it was twelve years before he was able to get them removed to London, and very soon after, they were attached by process of law. Between the years 1665 and 1670 Baxter laboured diligently on some of his most important works.

During this period, too, he had a discussion and correspondence with Dr. John Owen, about terms of agreement among Christians of all parties. Out of this, however, no practical result came. With a man of very different character, the Scotch Earl of Lauderdale, he had some correspondence, in which Lauderdale asked him to go to Scotland, to try to bring about some settlement there, and offered him a bishopric or a professorship, or such other position as he might desire. Baxter excused himself, partly on public grounds, and partly on the ground of health, as he did not think he could live in Scotland. Strange to say, his opinion of Lauderdale was not altogether unfavourable, though the earl turned out so cruel a scourge to his co-religionists that his name became a by-word. Baxter's charitable temper hoped the best in regard to men who had some compensating qualities, but the general drift of whose lives was too plainly evil.

In 1672 King Charles issued a declaration to the effect "that His Majesty, in virtue of his supreme power in matters ecclesiastical, suspends all penal laws thereabout, and that he will grant a convenient number of public meeting-places to men of all sorts that conform not." Under protection of this declaration, Baxter began a Tuesday lecture in a church near Fetter Lane. The Parliament declared the King's proclamation illegal, and soon after passed the Test Act, a new and very serious blow to the nonconformists.

Baxter continued preaching at various places in London with encouraging success, as far as the wretched state of his health allowed; but he was not allowed to pursue such useful labours in peace. Some of his brethren complained that he used too much of the English service, and it was given out confidently that he had conformed. On the other side he was harassed with prosecutions and threats of imprisonment. So vexatious were these proceedings that, finding it injurious to have any goods that might be distrained, he parted with all he had, including his library, which a year or two before he had at last got from Kidderminster. This must have been a serious blow. But Baxter quietly remarks, "We brought nothing into this world, and we must carry nothing out. The loss is very tolerable."

Still Baxter persevered with his preaching, and now, through the kindness of his friends, a commodious place of meeting was built for him in Oxenden Street. It happened, owing to the vigilant malice of his enemies, that he never preached but once in this place. He was obliged to let it stand empty, paying thirty pounds per annum for the ground rent, and glad to preach for nothing near it, in Swallow Street, in a chapel which some one had built on speculation.

In 1681 Baxter was visited by a great domestic trial—the death of his beloved wife, to whom he was deeply attached, and who had been a great comfort to him. Mrs. Baxter was taken away just before the storm broke on her husband in its greatest severity.

The worrying efforts to bring Baxter to account for continuing to preach in London went on more fiercely than ever. On 14th August 1682, after a short period of retirement, he had returned in miserable health, and on the 24th, after preaching, when in an extremity of pain, he was suddenly surprised by an informer, accompanied by many constables and officers, who rushed in, apprehended him, and served on him one warrant to seize his person for coming within five miles of a corporation, and other five, to distrain for a hundred and ninety-five pounds for five sermons. He was on his way to prison when he met his medical attendant, who sent him back, and took oath that he could not go to prison without danger to his life. But his goods were seized, and he had to take secret lodgings in another place.

Baxter was troubled also by money matters. In 1672 he had lost nearly all that he possessed, the King having caused his Exchequer to be shut, where Baxter had deposited his money. His goods and books had been distrained for payment of fines. His chapel had had to be closed. And now a sum of six hundred pounds, which had been bequeathed to him to be paid to sixty ejected ministers, was sued for in Chancery, and given to the King.

When James II. succeeded to the throne, the Puritans were chastised with scorpions. Baxter was one of those against whom a determined effort was made. His trial, under Judge Jeffreys, at the beginning of the reign of James II., may well be regarded as the most flagrant instance of the miscarriage of justice, and the most scandalous outrage on the forms of law and the dignity of a judicial court that our history supplies. The scene is graphically described in the first volume of Macaulay's *History of England.*

The charge against Baxter was that his *Paraphrase of the New Testament*, which had been published shortly before, was a seditious and scandalous book. He had had the hardihood to say something against the sufferings of the nonconformists! When the trial came on at Guildhall, Jeffreys first attempted to browbeat Pollexfen, Baxter's advocate. "Pollexfen, I know you well. . . . This is an old rogue, a schismatical knave, a hypocritical villain. He hates the liturgy.

He would have nothing but long-winded cant without book": and then his lordship turned up his eyes, clasped his hands, and began to sing through his nose, in imitation of what he supposed to be Baxter's style of praying: "Lord, we are Thy people, Thy peculiar people, Thy dear people." Pollexfen gently reminded the Court that his late Majesty had thought Baxter deserving of a bishopric. "And what ailed the old blockhead then," cried Jeffreys, "that he did not take it?" His fury now rose almost to madness. He called Baxter a dog, and swore that it would be no more than justice to whip such a villain through the whole city.

When the lawyers were silenced, Baxter himself attempted to put in a word. "My lord," said the old man, "I have been much blamed by dissenters for speaking respectfully of bishops." "Baxter for bishops!" cried the Judge, "that's a merry conceit, indeed! I know what you mean by bishops, rascals like yourself, Kidderminster bishops, factious, snivelling Presbyterians!" Again Baxter essayed to speak, and again Jeffreys bellowed: "Richard, Richard, dost thou think we will let thee poison the Court? Richard, thou art an old knave. Thou hast written books enough to load a cart, and every book as full of sedition as an egg is full of meat. By the grace of God, I'll look after thee!"

One of the junior counsel tried to show, by reading the context, that the words objected to in Baxter's book did not bear out the construction put on them. In a moment he was roared down. "You shan't turn the Court into a conventicle." The noise of weeping was heard from some of those that surrounded Baxter. "Snivelling calves!" said the Judge.

The jury returned a verdict of guilty. On a following day sentence was pronounced. Baxter was fined five hundred marks, condemned to lie in prison till he paid it, and bound to his good behaviour for seven years. He was unable to pay the fine, and he knew that even if he did he might be prosecuted again on any pretext; so with the weight of seventy years on his head, and a worse burden in the form of sore, continuous, harassing disease, to prison he went.

And there he lay for nearly two years. Yet his imprisonment was not so dreary as we might think. Baxter was allowed to occupy part of a private house near the prison. When it was seen that he would neither pay the fine nor petition for release, a private application appears to have been made to the King to relieve him. Coming events were now casting their shadows before, and the Court was finding more occasion for the good feeling of dissenters. On 28th February 1687 Baxter returned to his house and, as far as his health would permit, to his public labours.

For some four or five years he resided at Charter House Yard, assisting his friend, Mr. Sylvester, whose meeting-house was in that neighbourhood. When unable to go out, he threw his doors open at family worship, praying and reading and expounding the Scriptures with all who chose to come in. It was his joy to see at last a Government established in England which at least gave toleration to the dissenters. Baxter must have been disappointed that no place was found for them in the Church, and still more disappointed that the Test Act remained unrepealed, for though King William desired its removal, his counsellors were of another mind.

At last the hour came of Baxter's release. His death-bed was not one of raptures. While he had long and earnestly taught that the enjoyment of God was the great end and reward of true godliness, he did not in his own case have much experience of the sensible delights of divine communion. The peace in which he died was less a thing of the feelings than a conclusion of faith. He knew whom he had believed, and he knew that of God's infinite mercy all was well with him. He felt himself to be a great sinner, and saw that if he were to be tried by his works, it would be easy for God to condemn him for the best of them all. His whole hope was in the free mercy of God in Christ. Yet he felt the value of a life that had been spent, as his had been, in the earnest endeavour to do God's will. By this means it had been easier for him to exercise a steady faith in Jesus Christ as the Lamb of God that taketh away the sin of the world. The last hours of Baxter, like so much of his life, were hours of terrible pain. But on the morning of Tuesday, 8th December 1691, the last of his many pains was over, and through the valley of the shadow of death the wearied sufferer passed at last into "the saint's everlasting rest."

There are not many men that can be classed with Richard Baxter. Even among Puritans he stands alone. In many respects he was a combination of opposites. Intensely controversial, yet in heart most catholic; as devoted to logic as Thomas Aquinas, as soaring and ethereal as Bernard of Clairvaux; combining an intellect as clear and sharp as a diamond with the burning soul of a seraph; wasted and diseased in body, yet working with the energy and unweariedness of perfect health; uncompromising in his maintenance of the Gospel of the grace of God, yet with a charitable feeling to men on every side, who in many points were opposed to him; partly Calvinist, partly Arminian, mainly Presbyterian, but partly

Episcopalian, and partly Independent—Baxter indeed presented combinations unknown in any other man. The most remarkable of these combinations was intensity of conviction with great catholicity. There is something very beautiful in this combination, although it exposed Baxter to many a disparaging remark even from those with whom he had most in common, but who could not see why, if his convictions were so intense, his charity should diffuse itself over so wide a field.

Evidently, Baxter belonged, as we have already remarked, to the order of reconciling minds. He thought far more of the things in which men agreed than the things in which they differed. He was ever trying to bring harmonious elements together, not to drive discordant elements asunder. Much though he loved congenial fellowship, he saw clearly that in a vast institution like the visible Church of Christ, it was vain to hope that all should be found to conform to a single type. He was prepared to make room for greater diversities than evangelical champions generally would allow. On the subject of regeneration he held very high ground. No one could enter the kingdom of God unless he were born again. The change must not be merely formal or ecclesiastical, but real, inward, personal. In the sight of God no one could be a member of the Church who had not undergone this change. Yet Baxter held very decidedly that the administrators of the Church are not entitled to demand evidence of *this* change before receiving a man into fellowship. They are bound to have regard, and to give effect to, the desire of the applicant, if there be nothing to show that he is making a false profession. You can never secure that the Church as seen by man shall be precisely the same as the Church as seen by God.

From the very beginning of his career, Baxter was characterised by intense fervour and profound devotion. As years rolled over him, his personal feelings became only deeper and stronger, but he was less demonstrative. In an interesting account he gives of his experience, he tells of the change between youth and old age. In youth his style was more careless and flowing; afterwards more careful and guarded. In youth he was more confident of the correctness of all he uttered; afterwards he saw his ignorance more clearly. In his riper years he saw more evil and more good than in his youth, more evil in good men, and more good in those that had seemed wholly evil. As his life advanced, he grew in toleration. The sharp lines of separation that he had drawn in his youth had to be modified, and he felt more and more incapacitated for the task of judging men, and more and more disposed to commit judgment wholly to God.

What we have called the reconciling tendency of Baxter's mind may in some degree account for the peculiarities of his theology. His desire seemed to be to find a common ground on which devout men of all churches, not excepting even the Church of Rome, might come together.

The practical works of Baxter have been collected in twenty-three octavo volumes. If all that he published were brought together, the number of volumes would probably be sixty or seventy. Three of his books retain an undying vitality, *The Call to the Unconverted*, *The Saint's Rest*, and *The Reformed Pastor.*

JOHN BUNYAN

(1628–1688)

By
S. G. Green, D.D.

John Bunyan, son of Thomas Bunyan and Margaret Bentley his wife, was born in the village of Elstow, a mile from Bedford, November 1628. For the knowledge of his early days we are entirely indebted to his marvellous autobiography, *Grace abounding to the chief of Sinners;* and as this book is a record of mental impressions and spiritual experiences rather than of outward events, we are more familiar with the phases of his religious history than with the details of his life. His father belonged to the poorer classes, yet not to the very poorest. He was, as we should say, the "whitesmith" of the village, or, as he terms himself in his will, the "brasier," making or mending his neighbours' pots and pans; visiting Bedford and other towns on market days in pursuit of his craft:—no "gipsy" or travelling tinker, as some have represented, but a hard-working handicraftsman, able to give his children an ordinary education, and to leave at his death the freehold of his cottage to his family. John was the eldest child of a second marriage, and seems to have been taken from school at Elstow or Bedford, at an early age, to help his father in his trade.

Among the village lads of Elstow, the great Dreamer worked and played, unconscious of his destiny, but from very early life the subject of thick-coming fancies and intense emotions. "Even in my childhood," he writes, "the Lord did scare and affright me with fearful dreams, and did terrify me with dreadful visions." He had been early instructed in the truths of the Bible: these laid hold of his conscience, while his imagination gave distinctness and terror to his convictions of sin. When but nine or ten years old, he seemed in his very slumbers to be haunted by wicked spirits, and he was "greatly afflicted and troubled with the thoughts of the day of judgment."

But by degrees the vividness of these impressions passed away, and before he was sixteen he had become the "ringleader of all the youths that kept him company, into all manner of vice and ungodliness." Thus did Bunyan view his own state, in the light of God's pure and perfect law. According to conventional standards of morality, it is probable that a less severe judgment would have been passed. He was neither licentious nor a drunkard. Yet, with a defiant thoughtlessness, he had crushed his early convictions, and, like many a godless youth of active fancy and fluent speech, had been prone to sins of the tongue; especially to ingenious falsehoods and reckless oaths.

At the age of sixteen he lost his mother by death; in two months his father married again for a third time; John Bunyan left his home and enlisted as a soldier, in the civil war then raging. Here seems the glimpse of a sad family history, and of a passionate resolve which might, but for God's great mercy, have wrecked that bright spirit for ever. Bunyan's military career was brief. He could not have entered the army before the age of sixteen, November 1644; and the battle of Naseby, June 1645, practically closed the war. His soldier's life of six or seven months was not without its stirring experiences. In his record of providential deliverances he mentions that once he "fell into a creek of the sea and hardly escaped drowning." This suggests an encampment or march at some distance from his home. Again, he was once "drawn out to go to such a place to besiege it," when another begged to take his place, and was shot "as he stood sentinel." At what siege this incident occurred is uncertain. The tradition that it was at the siege of Leicester by the Royalist forces is extremely unlikely, as the evidence decisively points to Bunyan's having been on the side of the Parliament; having been in the first instance summoned with the Bedfordshire contingent to Newport Pagnell.[1] His military life is chiefly memorable as having familiarised him with the originals of "Greatheart" and of the warriors in "Mansoul."

The army was disbanded in 1646, and the lad of eighteen returned to his father's occupation at Elstow. Here he married his first wife, a virtuous, gentle girl of his own rank in life, who had received a Christian training. The young couple were "as poor as poor might be, we not having so much household-stuff as a dish or spoon betwixt us both." But she brought two books as her marriage-portion—*The Plain Man's Pathway to Heaven* and *The Practice of Piety*. Bunyan and his wife often conned these books together, and the youthful husband found in their pages an echo of the thoughts that, with all his recklessness, had never quite left him. Still he continued his intimacy with his former companions, and while his "Mercy" was quietly resting at home, he was found, with his old audacity, upon the village green. The era of the "Book of Sports" had come to an end; the church bells which had summoned to service on the Lord's day morning no longer rang for the football match or for "tip-cat" in the afternoon. But the games, however unlicensed, still continued. Bunyan tells how one Sunday, after being much impressed by a sermon in the morning against the profanation of the day, he "shook the sermon out of his mind," and was playing at "cat" in the afternoon, when he was brought to a sudden stand by what seemed a voice from heaven: Wilt thou leave thy sins and go to Heaven, or have thy sins and go to Hell? A glance upwards seemed to show the Lord Jesus looking down upon him "as hotly displeased"; the instant conclusion took hold of Bunyan's soul that it was now too late to seek salvation, and while standing there he formed the decision to *go on in sin.* "I can but be damned, and if it must be so, I had as good be damned for many sins as to be damned for a few." All this passed swiftly through his mind as he paused, with stick uplifted, in the midst of his play, his companions knowing nothing of the spiritual struggle. The game went on, and none but Bunyan knew how "desperately" he had "returned to the sport again."

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[1] See the exhaustive and invaluable *Biography* by Dr. John Brown.

In this terrible resolution to take his fill of sin Bunyan persisted for "about a month or more," when he was again arrested by the words of an Elstow dame, who chid him for "the ungodliest fellow for swearing that she ever heard in all her life," and "able to spoil all the youth in a whole town, if they came but in his company." This reproof from one who, Bunyan says, was herself but "a loose and ungodly wretch," touched him to the quick; and in his sudden shame he longed to be a little child again, that his father might teach him to speak without swearing. Was it now too late to make the effort? Bunyan at least would try. Greatly to his own surprise, he was able to leave off the bad habit from that day. This success encouraged him to make further efforts for self-reform. He began to read the Bible, tried heartily to keep the commandments, and thought he "pleased God as well as any man in England." His conscience became very sensitive as to the amusements that had been a snare to him. He gave up bell-ringing, which had been a favourite pursuit, though not without a struggle; he would often linger at the door of the Elstow church tower while others were practising, until the fear that the steeple might fall and crush him caused him to flee in terror. To abandon dancing cost him a twelvemonth's struggle. His neighbours were amazed at the change, and commended him much, to his secret pride; for, as he afterwards declared, he was "but a poor painted hypocrite," "without Christ or grace, or faith or hope."

Thus it was with Bunyan until the memorable day when, on a visit to Bedford, he came upon that group of poor women whom he has rendered immortal, "sitting at a door in the sun, talking about the things of God." He drew near to listen, perhaps to join in the conversation, being himself "a brisk talker in the matters of religion." But to his astonishment, the language of these good people was wholly strange to him. They spoke of heart experiences, mysterious conflicts and triumphs, happy fellowship with God, of which he knew nothing. "Methought they spake as if joy did make them speak!" There was a secret that he never yet had learned; and he went away, resolved, if possible, to attain this new knowledge. He frequented the society of these poor people, learning more and more of his own deficiencies and still crying for light. He turned to the Bible with new zest; "especially," he says, "the Epistles of the Apostle Paul were sweet and pleasant to me"; and at length the intense contrast between what he saw in these rejoicing Christians, and what he felt himself to be, shaped itself into a waking dream, in which we may discern some far-off glimpses of the *Pilgrim's Progress.*

"The state and happiness of these poor people at Bedford was thus, in a dream or vision, represented to me. I saw as if they were set on the sunny side of some high mountain, there refreshing themselves with the pleasant beams of the sun, while I was shivering and shrinking in the cold, afflicted with frost, snow, and dark clouds. Methought also, betwixt me and them, I saw a wall that did compass about this mountain. Now through this wall my soul did greatly desire to pass, concluding, that if I could, I would go even into the very midst of them, and there also comfort myself with the heat of their sun.

"About this wall I thought myself to go again and again, still prying as I went, to see if I could find some way or passage by which I might enter therein; but none could I find for some time. At the last, I saw, as it were, a narrow gap, like a little doorway in the wall, through which I attempted to pass; but the passage being very strait and narrow, I made many efforts to get in, but all in vain, even until I was well-nigh quite beat out by striving to get in; at last, with great striving, methought I at first did get in my head, and after that, by a sideling striving, my shoulders, and my whole body; then was I exceeding glad, and went and sat down in the midst of them, and so was comforted with the light and heat of their sun."

The vision prefigured a long mental struggle. Strange despairing thoughts often seemed to prevail; but at length the view of Christ as "our Righteousness" overcame all misgivings, and the ardent troubled soul of the Pilgrim entered into peace.

Bunyan was now a rejoicing believer ; yet the time of conflict was not over. He had crossed the Slough of Despond, and had surmounted the Hill Difficulty ; but he had yet to pass through the Valley of Humiliation, to do battle with Apollyon, and to quail amid the darkness before the spectres of the Valley of the Shadow of Death. But meanwhile he found a little rest in the Palace Beautiful. Already had the teachings of the Gospel been opened up to him by " Evangelist," in the person of JOHN GIFFORD, the wise and saintly pastor, once a soldier in the King's army, now incumbent of St. John's, Bedford, where, in accord with the comprehensive ecclesiastical system of the Commonwealth, he gathered and taught a Baptist Church, constituted with full freedom of communion to all who loved the Lord Jesus Christ, irrespective of their views concerning ordinances. Gifford was presented by the Corporation of Bedford to this incumbency in 1653 ; in the same year Bunyan became a member of the church, being baptized, according to tradition, in a little tributary of the Ouse, near Bedford Bridge.

The next two years, perhaps, were the most untroubled part of Bunyan's career. He was still living at Elstow with his wife and two little daughters. His was a nature which would enter into the joys of a true church fellowship ; and the happy converse of " Christian " with " Prudence, Piety, and Charity," symbolises for us the peaceful and invigorating communion enjoyed by Bunyan with the little company meeting in St. John's. Mr. Gifford, from the slight notices left of him, seems to have been a pastor eminently suited to the temperament of his young disciple, being both wise and strong, sympathetic and large-hearted. He was for five years pastor of the church, being removed by death in 1655, two years after receiving Bunyan into fellowship.

The year of Mr. Gifford's death witnessed the removal of Bunyan from Elstow to Bedford. His father was still living, and it is probable that the change of the son's residence was made for business reasons. He would naturally now take a more active part in the work of the church, and we find that in the year of his taking up his abode in the town he was asked by the brethren to speak a word of exhortation in their gatherings.[1] At first he was reluctant, then with fear and trembling he consented. His gifts were recognised at once, and he was appointed to go out into the villages with the lay preachers of the congregation. Hundreds soon came from all the country round to hear the tinker preach; and the church at Bedford with fasting and prayer set him apart in 1657 to the ministry of the Word, "not only to and amongst them that believed, but also to offer the Gospel to those who had not yet received the faith thereof."

Soon after Bunyan became a preacher, he appeared also as an author. The followers of George Fox, in preaching the doctrine of the inward light, appeared to Bunyan to disparage the written word; and as in their travels they came to Bedford, there are glimpses of animated discussions between them and Bunyan "at the market cross," and elsewhere. Nothing was more attractive to the sober Puritans of that day than a stirring theological debate—often with hard words given and received; and Bunyan entered so warmly into the question, that he treated it in a little volume entitled *Some Gospel Truths Opened* (1656), with a commendatory preface by John Burton, who had succeeded Gifford as pastor of the church.

A reply was published by Edward Burrough, a young man of note among Fox's disciples, and Bunyan rejoined in *A Vindication of Gospel Truths Opened*

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[1] Brown, *John Bunyan*, p. 110.

(1657), in which he still more earnestly pleads for what we should now call an historical Christianity, in distinction from what appeared to his strong and healthy common-sense a delusive mysticism. In the year following he published a very earnest and solemn exposition of the parable of Dives and Lazarus: *A Few Sighs from Hell, or the Groans of a Damned Soul;* and in 1659 a striking treatise entitled *The Doctrine of the Law and Grace Unfolded*, in which it is not difficult to see the germ of *Grace Abounding*, which was written seven years afterwards.

At the same time he continued in the diligent prosecution of his worldly business, and was fairly successful. "God had increased his stores," writes a contemporary biographer, "so that he lived in great credit among his neighbours."

But this period was not without its share of bitter conflicts. One year began with a serious and prolonged failure of health, accompanied by great spiritual depression—the natural reaction, as may well be supposed, of his intense experiences. His terrified spirit found itself within the Valley of the Shadow of Death. But "by and by the day broke; then said Christian, He hath turned the shadow of death into the morning."

A bitter sorrow had visited his home. The wife of his youth—the gentle "Mercy,"[1]—who seems to have borne him two children after the removal to Bedford, had been taken from him by death. His eldest child, Mary, a girl of seven at the time, was blind, and we do not wonder to find that she was peculiarly dear to her father.

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[1] "We do not know her Christian name," remarks Dr. Brown, who has not been able to find the registry of Bunyan's first marriage. It was probably at a distance from Bedford, but the place is quite unknown. The comparison of Bunyan's two wives to "Mercy" and "Christiana" was made by the late T. T. Lynch.

Thus left with four little ones, his course was for a while sad and solitary. Of sorrows like these, however, he tells us but little; he is occupied rather with the temptations and difficulties which beset him in his work. What true minister of the Gospel will not sympathise with Bunyan's account of his own trials?

"In this work, as in all other, I had my temptations attending me, and that of divers kinds; as sometimes I should be assaulted with great discouragement therein, fearing that I should not be able to speak a word at all to edification; nay, that I should not be able to speak sense unto the people; at which times I should have such a strange faintness and strengthlessness seize upon my body, that my legs have scarce been able to carry me to the place of exercise.

"Again, when sometimes I have been about to preach upon some smart and searching portion of the Word, I have found the tempter suggest, 'What! will you preach this? This condemns yourself; of this your own soul is guilty; wherefore preach not of this at all; or if you do, yet so mince it as to make way for your own escape; lest, instead of awakening others, you lay that guilt upon your own soul, that you will never get from under.'"

But these and other trials he was enabled to surmount; and if ever he found himself in Doubting Castle, the "Key called Promise" eventually opened all the locks of the prison, and once again he was free.

In 1659 he married his second wife, Elizabeth, the Christiana of the *Pilgrim's Progress*, who became a true mother to his children; and to her husband, as we shall see, a brave-hearted, heroic helper in time of need.

In the year 1660 Charles II. was recalled by the English people and placed upon the throne. Old laws were at once put in force against the nonconformists, and Bunyan was the first to suffer. A statute of the 35th year of Elizabeth required all persons to attend at their parish churches on pain of imprisonment. If at the end of three months they still refused, they were to be banished the realm; and if they should at any time return without royal permission, they were to be executed as felons. Of this Act Bunyan's enemies now took advantage. The Baptist congregation had been deprived of its place of meeting and was now without a pastor. Bunyan faced the situation, and determined to continue to hold assemblies and to preach so long as he should have opportunity. As he afterwards said, "The law hath provided two ways of obeying; the one to do that which I in my conscience do believe that I am bound to do actively, and the other, when I cannot obey actively, I am willing to lie down and suffer what they shall do unto me." His resolution was soon put to the proof. Being asked to address a meeting on the 12th of November at Samsell, a village near Harlington, about thirteen miles south of Bedford, he was warned beforehand that a warrant was out for his arrest. The friend at whose house the service was to be held, "questioned," says Bunyan, "whether we had best have our meeting or not, and whether it might not be better for me to depart:—to whom I said, 'No, by no means, I will not stir, neither will I have the meeting dismissed for this. Come, be of good cheer; let us not be daunted.'"

At the appointed time, accordingly, he took his place among the little company, and began the service. In a few minutes the constable appeared with his warrant, and Bunyan was able to address only a few words of encouragement to his friends before he was led away. On the morrow he was brought before the justice who had issued the warrant, Mr. Francis Wingate, and a lively examination ensued, the vicar of Harlington, Dr. Lindall, whom Bunyan calls an "old enemy of the truth," stepping in to take part in the proceedings. Mr. Wingate, it appears, had some confused notion of the complicity of the little congregation with the Fifth Monarchy men, who at this time were stirring up great commotion in London and elsewhere. One of his first questions to the constable was to ascertain what weapons had been found on Bunyan and his followers. The constable could but reply that there were only "a few people met together to preach and hear the Word, and no sign of anything else." On this the magistrate was bewildered, then lost his temper. The vicar coming in made matters worse. Bail was required for the prisoner, and was instantly tendered. The sureties, however, were informed that they were bound to keep Bunyan from preaching, and that, if he did preach, their recognisances would be forfeited. The brave man instantly replied that he should refuse to keep the conditions; and therefore released his friends from their promise. Further parley ensued with a Mr. Foster, lawyer, of Bedford, who professed much attachment to Bunyan, and tried to induce him only to promise "not to call the people together any more, for no one really wanted to send him to prison." But he was firm, and Mr. Wingate committed him to Bedford jail, there to lie until the quarter sessions.

"And verily," writes Bunyan, "as I was going forth of the doors, I had much ado to forbear saying to them (Wingate and Foster) that I carried the peace of God along with me; but I held my peace, and, blessed be the Lord, went away to prison with God's comfort in my poor soul."

In seven weeks from that time the quarter sessions were held at Bedford; and after a remarkably lively scene between Mr. Justice Keeling and the dauntless young Puritan, sentence was pronounced as follows:

"Hear your judgment: You must be had back again to prison, and there lie for three months following; and at three months' end, if you do not submit to go to church to hear divine service, and leave your preaching, you must be banished the realm: and if, after such a day as shall be appointed you to be gone, you shall be found in this realm, etc., or be found to come over again without special licence from the king, etc., you must stretch by the neck for it, I tell you plainly."

Such was the best return which the world had in that day to give to the man whom God had raised up to be among its wisest and noblest teachers!

So Bunyan, to use his own repeated expression, went "home to prison."

Three months passed, and the assizes were about to be held. The justices were at their wits' end what to do with their impracticable prisoner. Their clerk, Mr. Cobb, went to the jail, to expostulate with him further. But John Bunyan was more than a match for Mr. Cobb. Their dialogue, too long to be quoted here, was racy and good-tempered: they parted in friendliness, and Bunyan adds, in recording the interview, "Oh that we might meet in heaven!"

The coronation of the King, 23rd April 1661, seemed to afford an opportunity for the release of Bunyan with that of thousands of other prisoners. It was held necessary, however, that all who had been convicted should sue for pardon; and as this would have implied the promise to offend no more, Bunyan could not take any step in this direction. He maintained, moreover, that the sentence of quarter sessions had been irregular and illegal, and claimed a formal trial.

At the August assizes, accordingly, he presented a petition that his case might be heard by the judges of the realm. One of these judges was Sir Matthew Hale, the other was Judge Twisden. The petition was committed by Bunyan to his brave wife Elizabeth, who had previously visited London on the same errand, and had succeeded in interesting some noblemen and members of Parliament in her husband's case. Mrs. Bunyan was at first kindly received by Hale; but afterwards, throwing her petition into the judges' coach, was harshly repulsed by Twisden. Undauntedly, however, this true Christiana, introduced by the high sheriff, made her way into court and repeated her appeal. One of the county justices, Sir Henry Chester, urged in opposition that Bunyan had been duly convicted at the quarter sessions. In vain did she argue with her woman's wit against the legality of the conviction. There was nothing for it, said Hale, kindly enough, but either to sue for the King's pardon, or to apply for a writ of error. So the matter dropped. The simple words of Elizabeth Bunyan deserve to be placed side by side with the noblest utterances of heroic womanhood. "Will not your husband leave preaching?" it was asked of her; "if he will do so, then send for him." "My lord," said she, "he dares not leave preaching as long as he can speak." "Only this, I remember," she said afterwards, "that though I was somewhat timorous at my first entrance into the chamber, yet before I went out I could not but break forth into tears, not because they were so hard-hearted against me and my husband, but to think what a sad account such poor creatures will have to give at the coming of the Lord."

At first, the imprisonment of Bunyan was not very rigid. By permission of the jailer he was able to go out into the country places and hold occasional services. He even attended church meetings in Bedford in September and October 1661; and once travelled to London "to see Christians" in that city. It was almost as if he were out on bail, still expecting that his case would be heard by the judges. But in this hope he was again disappointed. After his case had actually been entered in the calendar, it was, through some sinister influence, withdrawn; the jailer being, at the same time, sharply taken to task for the measure of liberty allowed his prisoner. Bunyan was now rigorously confined; "so that," he says, "I must not look out at the door."

The stoutest heart might have quailed at the prospect now before the brave prisoner. His case unheard, his business going to wreck, his wife and blind daughter, and three little ones besides, left dependent on friends or on the world's cold mercies, his chosen work forbidden him, and his appeal to justice persistently ignored:—what could be more desolate? True, he might have ended it all by a promise "to speak no more nor to teach in the name of Jesus." But rather than this, he would lose all; rather than this, he would die! At first he did sometimes anticipate the gallows with which he had been threatened by Justice Keeling. And, in the prospect of that fate, it is characteristic that his great fear was lest he should seem to tremble before he leaped off the ladder, and so bring discredit on his profession. But there was little time for lonely broodings. For one thing, he must earn a livelihood; he learned to "tag laces," and made many hundred gross, "to fill up," says an acquaintance, "the vacancies of his time," as well as to meet other and more substantial needs. "In a museum of the saints," it has been said, "a lace-tag by Bunyan would be very interesting!" The "vacancies of his time" were still better "filled" by writing those books in which his genius now first found full scope, and which have made those long prison months and years an immortal remembrance. "*As I walked through the wilderness of this world, I lighted on a certain place, where was a Den; and I laid me down in that place to sleep: and as I slept, I dreamed a Dream.*"

Bunyan remained in prison for twelve years—1660 to 1672. The period was divided by a brief interval of freedom in 1666, when he was released "through the intercession of some in trust and power that took pity upon his suffering"; but he was speedily re-arrested for holding a religious service, and remained a prisoner until Charles's specious Declaration of Indulgence set him free.

Bunyan's library all this time chiefly consisted of two books, the English Bible and Foxe's *Acts and Monuments*. But he was free to use his pen, and eight of his published works belong to the first period of his imprisonment. Three are in verse: the *Four Last Things*, *Ebal and Gerizim*, and *Prison Meditations*. Although possessing many a quaint turn and some few startling felicities, these compositions cannot be called poetry; the chief characteristic of the homely rhymes is a rough directness and common-sense, with earnest devout feeling. Bunyan was a poet in prose, but by no means one in rhyme! He also wrote short devotional treatises: *Profitable Meditations*, *A Discourse on Prayer*, *On the Resurrection*, and *The Holy City*, which last strikingly applies the apocalyptic vision of the New Jerusalem to the spiritual Church of Christ on earth.

To these smaller works must be added the *Grace*

Abounding, the date of which was 1666. The unequalled power and pathos of this autobiography were at once confessed, and six editions of the book were published in the author's lifetime.

From the date of his re-arrest in 1666 until that of his release in 1672 only two works of his appeared, both in the latter year. One deserves notice, not only for its own sake, but as a specimen of the then current style of religious controversy. It is entitled *A Defence of Justification by Faith in Jesus Christ*, in reply to a rationalistic work by Dr. Fowler, afterwards Bishop of Gloucester, on "the Design of Christianity." In his preface Bunyan enumerates forty of Mr. Fowler's alleged errors, set in order in a list; then without stint or reserve of language he attacks and denounces them all. "Your book, sir, is begun in ignorance, managed with error, and ended in blasphemy." Bunyan calls his own book an "unpleasant scribble"; yet he never wrote more vigorously or with more consummate skill in the quotation and arrangement of Scripture texts. This mastery of the Word of God is also shown in the latest tractates belonging to this prison period: *A Confession of my Faith*, and *A Reason of my Practice in Worship;* the former being a summary of the principles of Puritan theology, fortified at every point by the citation of passages from Scripture, the latter setting forth Bunyan's views as to Church fellowship, under two heads: "(1) With whom I dare not hold communion; (2) with whom I dare." Under the latter division there is a defence of free Christian Communion, which perhaps exhausts all that is to be said on that side of the question.

During the latter part of his imprisonment his treatment was considerably mitigated. He was permitted again at intervals to leave the jail and to mingle with his brethren. We find his name at frequent intervals among the attendants at the church-meetings in Bedford;[1] and before his formal liberation he had been chosen pastor of the little community. His election to that office bears date 21st January 1672; he received a licence to preach, under the Indulgence, on the 9th of May; and his pardon under the Great Seal bears date the 13th of September.

In the forty-fourth year of his life, therefore, he was free; and for sixteen years his active pastoral life continued, with a six months' interval of imprisonment in 1675. When he thus came forth from prison in the prime of life, it was with a mind well furnished, and a mastery of language, partly natural, partly acquired, that placed him at once in the highest rank of teachers.

A barn belonging to one of the congregation was licensed and fitted up as a place of worship, and Bunyan entered upon what he ever regarded as the great work of his life—the ministry of the glorious Gospel of the Grace of God.

Six years after Bunyan's release the *Pilgrim's Progress* first appeared. It is certain, however, that the book had been written in prison, and it is probable that during his brief incarceration in 1675 the book was completed from its first draft. Happy was the opportunity thus afforded signally "out of evil still educing good!"

The book at once became popular. A second edition followed the first in the very year of publication, succeeded the next year by a third. In each of these new issues there were important additions. Mr. Worldly Wiseman was an afterthought; Mr. By-ends and his friends, with their discourse with Christian and Faithful, first appear in the third edition, while the second had given a wife, Mistress Diffidence, to Giant Despair.

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[1] See Extracts from the church-book, in Dr. Brown's Life, pp. 204-213.

To comment upon the *Pilgrim's Progress* would now be superfluous. Its deepest though most subtle charm is that it is the history of a soul. We hardly need the details of *Grace Abounding* for the assurance that the picture of a human life is before us, rare indeed in its capacities of enjoyment and of suffering, in the tenderness of its conscience and the heroism of its endeavours; and yet, although upon a grander scale, such a life as all of us who are in earnest about salvation feel that we too are called to live. We recognise ourselves, as in a glass; we know also the types of character portrayed. Even the allegorical personages are not abstractions, like those of Spenser; they are flesh and blood: we exclaim, with Christian, as one or another is introduced to us, "Oh, I know him: he is my townsman, my near neighbour, he comes from the place where I was born." The masters of literature have acknowledged the power and the charm of this Bedford tinker's book. True, their recognition was belated: it is an instance, as Macaulay observes, in which the critical few have come round to the opinion of the many. Cowper almost apologises for mentioning the *Pilgrim's Progress*, and will not introduce into his verse the author's name, lest it should provoke a sneer. But now Bunyan is an acknowledged classic. "In the latter half of the seventeenth century," writes Macaulay again, "there were only two minds which possessed the imaginative faculty in a very eminent degree. One of those minds produced the *Paradise Lost;* the other the *Pilgrim's Progress*." Coleridge remarks that the child reads the *Pilgrim's Progress* for its story, the theologian for its doctrine, and the critic for its language. Of this last, indeed, Bunyan in some of his homely rhymes has told the secret:

Thine only way
Before them all, is to say out thy say
In thine own native language, which no man
Now useth, nor with ease dissemble can.

Bunyan was now at his best. In the same year with the *Pilgrim's Progress* appeared his *Come and welcome to Jesus Christ*, "with its musical title and soul-moving pleas." The book is a sequel, in fact, to *Grace Abounding;* the difficulties and excuses described as hindering the soul's return to God are those which Bunyan himself had known; the arguments urged with such melting and winning force are those which had prevailed over his own reluctant heart. One or two minor treatises followed. Then came the great companion picture to the "Pilgrim": *The Life and Death of Mr. Badman.*

This terrible delineation of an evil career is in no sense an allegory; the topic could not so be treated, nor could the way of transgressors be idealised into a pilgrimage. In its hard unredeemed baseness and moral ugliness the life of a selfish, irreligious, vulgar profligate is portrayed, with no touch of poetry or sentiment to relieve the deformity. Such lives were lived, no doubt, in that as in every age, and Bunyan may have met Badman's prototypes every Bedford market-day; for this type of evil is not classed with the openly criminal, evidently destined from the first to a bad end. For a while he is a seemingly prosperous tradesman; he affects to be religious; he marries well; then again he throws off the yoke and becomes an atheist, "if such a thing as an atheist could be." But we need not follow his career, through stage after stage of fraud and shame. To the end he keeps himself well out of the grasp of the law, and though ruined in fortune, dies without fear. "When he drew near his end," writes Bunyan, "there was not any other alteration in him than what was made by his disease upon his body. His mind was the same, his heart was the same. He was the self-same Mr. Badman still, not only in name but conditions, and that to the very day of his death, yea, so far as could be gathered, to the very moment in which he died." "There seemed not to be in it to standers-by so much as a strong struggle of nature,—and as for his mind, it seemed to be wholly at quiet." "He died like a lamb." The picture is a fearful one throughout, and this solemn close, with its suggestion of the awakening after death, enhances its awfulness.

The book has never been popular. Its moral dissections are almost too remorseless; and its gloom is unrelieved. Then, in parts, its very truth to life makes it unquestionably coarse. The form of dialogue into which it is cast is also unattractive. Mr. Wiseman tells the story, Mr. Attentive listens and makes his comments. Many anecdotes of awful judgments on transgressors, and other sensational incidents, are interspersed, to which our times perhaps would give another interpretation than Bunyan's. Now and then, too, the discussion between the two interlocutors waxes tedious. But on the whole it is a book of terrible power, and every student of Bunyan should read it, after *Grace Abounding*, the *Pilgrim's Progress*, and the *Holy War*.

We come now to the wonderful story of "Mansoul," its rebellion, siege, and deliverance. This appeared in 1682; and lays under contribution the author's experience in the field and before courts of justice, to illustrate the religious history of man, fallen, convicted, and struggling against conviction; converted and renewed, yet imperfect to the end. It has sometimes been questioned whether the author's great theme was mankind or the individual. There can scarcely be a doubt that he had the latter chiefly in view. To him the salvation of one soul was the result of the strife and clash of spiritual forces, to the close contending for the mastery. Among the inhabitants of Mansoul, Lord Will-be-will is the hero of the story. Many of the characters brought upon this scene of stirring warfare are necessarily but impersonations of qualities; they lack the human interest of those in the *Pilgrim's Progress;* and the later allegory can never speak to the heart like its predecessor. But nothing could excel the knowledge of the human heart and its conflicts which the book evinces. The trial of the Diabolonians is a masterpiece of spiritual pathology. And how expressive the description, at the close, of the "new man" still beset by earthly imperfections!

"Then my lord Self-denial took courage, and set to pursuing of the Diabolonians with my lord Will-be-will; and they took Live-by-feeling, and they took Legal-life, and put them in hold till they died. But Mr. Unbelief was a nimble Jack; him they could never lay hold of, though they attempted to do it often. He therefore, and some few more of the subtlest of the Diabolonian tribe, did yet remain in Mansoul, to the time that Mansoul left off to dwell any longer in the kingdom of Universe."

Of smaller works, chiefly expositions, which appeared during this fertile period of Bunyan's life, Doe mentions *The Barren Fig-Tree*, *The Greatness of the Soul*, and *The Pharisee and the Publican;* with several other tracts, notably *A Case of Conscience resolved:* the "case" being that of women's employment in conducting religious meetings. Bunyan gives to this question a decided negative, citing Bible rules and precedents, enumerating reasons, and answering objections, in a very curious way. The reader will at least sympathise with its closing sentence: "I entreat that these lines may be taken in good part, for I seek edification, not contention."

That Bunyan fully appreciated the worth and beauty of Christian womanhood he nobly showed in the *Second Part of the Pilgrim's Progress*, published 1684, six years after the first part. This sequel is necessarily inferior in interest to the account of Christian's own pilgrimage. Not even Bunyan could present another's experience as vividly as his own. Yet the characters are true, many of the sketches are exquisite in their beauty, and there are some touches unequalled in their tenderness by anything in the earlier and grander part of the story. There is a current phrase as to choosing to "live with" a picture. Perhaps of all the pictures with which any of us might well delight to live, none is to be preferred to that of the Valley of Humiliation, not as when Christian passed through it, dark in shadow, and with the awful form of Apollyon "coming over the field to meet him"; but as when Christiana, with her children and Mercy, escorted by bold Great-heart, found it, "beautiful with lilies," and saw the shepherd boy who "sat by himself and sung:

He that is down need fear no fall;
  He that is low, no pride;
He that is humble, ever shall
  Have God to be his guide."

The last four years of Bunyan's life had but few noticeable events. He continued an indefatigable pastor and preacher, itinerating largely, annually visiting London, always attracting crowded congregations.[1] His counsel was sought far and wide; ministers and churches appealed to him in their difficulties: he was known familiarly as "Bishop Bunyan." Inducements were held out to him to accept more conspicuous positions, but he preferred his home, where the very prison walls, as he passed them in the street, would remind him of converse with angels and of glimpses into the Celestial City. His household life was calm and happy. The blind child, his darling Mary, had been taken to her heavenly home during the later days of his imprisonment; but his true wife Elizabeth was still by his side, and the three remaining children, born of his "Mercy" in the old Elstow days, were growing in stability of character and true godliness. To one of his boys a London merchant had offered a place in his house, but Bunyan had refused. "God did not send me," he said, "to advance my family, but to preach the Gospel." His worldly circumstances had improved, though he was never rich; his health also appears to have been good. "Happy in his work, happy in the sense that his influence was daily extending, spreading over his own country, and to the far-off settlements in America, he spent his last years in his own land of Beulah, Doubting Castle out of sight, and the towers and minarets of Emmanuel's Land growing nearer and clearer as the days went on."[2]

His latest books were now written, including *The Jerusalem Sinner saved*, in which he interprets the Lord's words, "Beginning at Jerusalem," as implying "good news to the vilest of men"—a view of the text which he unfolds and applies with marvellous power;

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[1] On one occasion, it is recorded, 3000 people came to hear him in Zoar St., Southwark, "so that half were fain to go back again for want of room."

[2] J. A. Froude.

also the *Divine Emblems*, containing some of his happiest metrical effusions. To this period of his life also belongs his controversial work, written in reply to some of his brother Baptists in London, *Water Baptism no bar to Christian Communion:* with his book on *Solomon's Temple*, in which every part is spiritualised —not only the altars, the laver, the candlestick and the shewbread, the veil and the mercy-seat; but the doors, windows, pillars, porches, pinnacles and stairs, the bowls and basins, the snuffers and snuffer-dishes; with other appurtenances of the temple—under seventy heads, all copiously illustrated from Scripture. It would be strange if some of the applications were not forced: the author's fancy proves itself more fertile, if possible, than ever; and we smile at the simple conclusion of the seventy particulars: "Thus you see something of that little I have found in the Temple of God."

Many other works written by Bunyan from time to time cannot here be enumerated. He is said by his friend Charles Doe to have "lived sixty years and written sixty books." Some of these were not printed during his lifetime, as an *Exposition of the First Ten Chapters of Genesis*, *The House of the Forest of Lebanon*, and *The Heavenly Footman.*

The end of Bunyan's life came in 1688, the year of the Revolution, which event he did not live to see. He had been but little troubled by the succession of James the Second to his brother Charles, and in the consequent agitations. He found himself at larger liberty to preach the Gospel and to visit the churches. His last journey was taken on an errand of mercy. He had travelled from Bedford to Reading on horseback, to effect a reconciliation between a father and son. Having succeeded in his errand, he purposed returning by way of London, and rode from Reading to the metropolis in heavy rain. A chill came on, which, however, did not prevent his preaching once more (19th August, at Mr. Gamman's meeting, near Whitechapel)—a brief and interesting discourse on being born of God, printed from the notes of a hearer under the title of *Mr. Bunyan's Last Sermon.* Fever ensued, and the great preacher breathed his last, in his sixtieth year, on 31st August 1688. His remains were interred in Bunhill Fields, where an appropriate monument marks his place of burial.

The statue raised to Bunyan's memory in 1874 at Bedford presents him in the attitude of preaching; and upon the pedestal is inscribed an extract from his own noble description of the minister of Christ:

"Christian saw the picture of a very grave person hung up against the wall: and this was the fashion of it; it had eyes lifted up to heaven, the best of books in his hand; the law of truth was written upon his lips, the world was behind his back; it stood as if it pleaded with men, and a crown of gold did hang over its head."

JOHN WESLEY.

JOHN WESLEY

(1703–1791)

By
J. H. Rigg, D.D.

JOHN WESLEY was born 17th June 1703, at Epworth, where his father, the Rev. Samuel Wesley, was rector during the first thirty years of the eighteenth century. He was five years older than his brother Charles, so long his companion in labour and so gifted as a sacred poet. The rectory was filled with a numerous family, of whom those that grew up, whether sons or daughters, were all accomplished. Brave, bright spirits and high principles were the growth of that remote Lincolnshire parsonage. It was the home of strict and earnest religion, of much learning, of true high breeding, and of pinching and sometimes bitter poverty. Both the rector and his wife came of a line of Puritan ancestors, who had endured persecution for their faith, but who were at once gentlemen, scholars, and divines; and the training in the parsonage was not unworthy of such a twofold ancestry.

Susanna Wesley was an admirable mother, and it was her custom to give each of her children an hour a week, on a fixed day, for religious conversation and prayer. It was on Thursday that she conversed and prayed with John. Orderliness, reasonableness, steadfastness of purpose, calm authority, tender affection, were combined in the mother of the Wesleys. And all these qualities were remarkably reproduced in her son John.

When John Wesley was six years old the rectory was set on fire by a malicious parishioner. All the rest of the family had escaped safely from the flaming house, when it was found that "Jacky" was missing. Two brave fellows rescued him at great peril to themselves, and he was delivered into his father's arms.

"Come, neighbours," said the rector, "let us kneel down; let us give thanks to God! He has given me all my eight children. Let the house go: I am rich enough."

John Wesley commemorated this escape, in after life, by an engraving, under one of his portraits, of a house in flames, underneath which is the motto: "Is not this a brand plucked out of the burning?"

Before he was eleven the boy was sent to the Charterhouse School. Here he suffered such hardships and oppressions as were common at public schools in that age. But he was a diligent and successful scholar, and a patient and forgiving boy, of a brave and elastic spirit, who had at home been inured, not indeed to oppression, but to hard living and scanty fare. When, therefore, his seniors robbed him of the best portions of his meat, as they not seldom did, he could bear the privation with more patience, and perhaps with less injury, than if he had been a full-fed and pampered child. It is a characteristic feature in his case that he seems to have carried away on the whole pleasant recollections of his school where, in due time, he rose to be among the most distinguished scholars. Once a year in later life it was his custom to revisit the scene of his school-days and walk round the Charterhouse garden, "chewing the cud" of early memories, to him more sweet than bitter.

Wesley left Charterhouse and went to Oxford, the University of his family and forefathers, in 1720, having been elected to a studentship at Christ Church. He was seventeen years of age when he thus became a resident at Oxford, where he was to remain, with the exception of a comparatively short period of curacy with his father, for the next fifteen years of his life. At this time he was a clever, sprightly, and upright youth, full of wit and pleasantry, exact and forward in his work, who duly attended the services of the Church, who read the Scriptures and religious books, especially commentaries, but who was without any true apprehension of spiritual religion. He was a devout, yet half worldly, young Pharisee, not unlike the ruler in the Gospels, only without possessions.

In due course John Wesley took his degree. At this time he had a high reputation at the University, not only as a scholar, but as a gentleman and a pleasant friend and companion. "He appeared," we are told by a contemporary, "the very sensible and acute collegian, a young fellow of the finest classical taste, of the most liberal and manly sentiments." As yet no discredit of severe religiousness attached to him.

In 1725, however, when he was twenty-two years of age, and had in view his preparation for taking holy orders, he became increasingly serious; and in 1726, when he was elected Fellow of Lincoln College, he took advantage of the exchange of college residence made necessary by this appointment to give a resolute, though not uncourteous, *congé* to all his former acquaintances who were not serious and earnest like himself.

Meantime, during the year 1725 he had received deacon's orders. During the same year he had read the *Christian Pattern* and Jeremy Taylor's *Holy Living* *and Dying.* The effect of these books was deeply to awaken his conscience, and not less to awaken his critical intelligence as to certain points of Christian belief. He rejected—as we learn from a letter to his mother—the doctrine taught by Jeremy Taylor that a child of God cannot on earth know that he is a new creature and at peace with God. "If we dwell in Christ, and Christ in us, certainly," he insists, "we must be sensible of it." In the same year also he made up his mind once and for all—as likewise appears from a letter to his mother—that the doctrine of reprobation was to be altogether rejected. Further, in the self-same year, from the books already named, he learned the doctrine of entire Christian consecration and holiness, the equivalent of which afterwards found its place in his matured theology as the Methodist doctrine of "Christian Perfection."

Thus, almost at one stroke, his logical and systematic mind had shaped into form, at this early date, three out of the four points of doctrine which were afterwards to define Wesleyan theology, viz. conscious salvation, general grace, and the privilege and duty of Christian purity of heart and life. But with all this the root-truth of experimental theology was still far away from his thought, completely out of his sight. Thirteen years were to pass before he learnt St. Paul's doctrine as to "the righteousness of faith."

For four years after this (1725-1729) Wesley's views would appear to have undergone little change. A rigid adherence to the rubrics of his Church made for him the sum of religious means and duties.

"From the year 1725 to 1729," he himself said afterwards, "I preached much, but saw no fruit of my labour. Indeed, it could not be that I should, for I neither laid the foundation of repentance nor of preaching the Gospel, taking it for granted that all to whom I preached were believers, and that many of them needed no repentance. From the year 1729 to 1734, laying a deeper foundation of repentance, I saw a little fruit; but it was only a little, and no wonder, for I did not preach faith in the blood of the covenant."

The period 1729-1734, of which John Wesley here speaks, coincided with the rise and course of the Methodist Society at Oxford. Of this, though it was founded by Charles Wesley in 1729 during his brother John's absence in his father's parish, where he was serving for a time as curate, from the moment of his return to Oxford, John was recognised as of necessity the head. The bond of association among the members of this Society, besides weekly communion, was the common study of the New Testament, with which they joined regular fasting, stated hours for private devotion, visitation of the sick and poor, and of prisoners, and the instruction of children. This strict and unworldly Society received many derisive names from outsiders. But the name which prevailed was "Methodist." This title followed the Wesleys when, ten years later, and after their return from America, they founded a very different Society, one which, although the same name was given to it and stuck to it, was in its characteristic principles and doctrines the greatest possible contrast to the Methodist Society of Oxford. In one respect, however, there was an undeniable fitness in the title as applied to both Societies, descriptive as it was of one unchanging and inseparable feature of Wesley's personal character and habits, a feature which he impressed also very generally on his followers.

Mention must here be made of a special influence with which the Wesleys had been brought into contact a year or two before this time (about 1727). The two great writings of William Law, his *Serious Call* and his *Christian Perfection*, were published at the period to which we refer, and had a powerful effect on both the brothers, bringing Charles, in particular, to a state of serious decision to which before he had been a stranger. It was, as we have seen, the awakened Charles who, during his brother's absence from Oxford, first organised in 1729 the Society which received the nickname "Methodist." On John Wesley, Law's two books produced the further effect of sending him to Putney to consult Law in regard to things spiritual. This was in 1732, and, for two or three years after this, Law was to John Wesley a sort of oracle.

Law was a Jacobite, a nonjuror, and, like most of the same school, an extreme Laudian High Churchman. A few years afterwards he became addicted to the mystical school of theology, or, to speak more correctly, theosophy, and eventually he went all lengths with Jacob Behmen. His influence on Wesley in 1732 was to make him a still more extreme High Churchman, a tendency which continued to increase upon him for some years. Afterwards the influence of Law led Wesley to read and admire the mystic writers and to endeavour to combine ritualism and mysticism in his religious life.

Between 1732 and 1735, accordingly, Wesley and the Oxford Methodists generally became intensely and increasingly High Church. Such mere externalism, however, could not but often be weary and dreary work to Wesley. What he wanted was life, inspiration, a well-spring. Like many another under similar circumstances he was tempted to seek after satisfaction in the shadowy region of mysticism, whither, indeed, his teacher Law was now beckoning him to follow. Not understanding anything as to the true spiritual union with

Christ through faith and the new birth, he sought by contemplation, by abstraction, by asceticism, to attain to that self-inwrought identification with God, as revealed in Christ—which, however, is in truth only an illusion—whereby the mystic school, in varying forms and degrees, has, in misguided yet often noble earnestness, counterfeited the spiritual union through faith of the renewed soul with God in Christ. In this condition, endeavouring to unite extreme High Churchmanship and some tincture of mysticism in an asceticism at once severe and loving, Wesley continued for some years. "Though I could never," he says, "come into this"—the quietism of the mystics—"nor contentedly omit what God enjoined, yet, I know not how, I fluctuated between obedience and disobedience—continually doubting whether I was right or wrong, and never out of perplexities and entanglements. Nor can I at this hour give a distinct account how I came back a little toward the right way; only my present sense is this—all the other enemies of Christianity are triflers; the mystics are the most dangerous; and its most serious professors are most likely to fall by them." These words were written in 1738, a few months before Wesley's "conversion."

Wesley left England to go to Georgia, as a missionary of the Society for the Propagation of the Gospel, in the autumn of 1735; he had left Oxford a few months earlier. With his departure from Oxford—his brother also left the University at the same time—Methodism in Oxford came to an end, and, what is more, Oxford Methodism came to an end. Never at any one time does the Oxford Society appear to have numbered as many as thirty members; and the Society can hardly be said to have had any organisation. There was a small band of men who were called "Methodists," and who were strict, rubrical High Churchmen, and met at each other's rooms—or at Wesley's rooms—for reading and prayer, and were zealous of good works. But there was no common bond of special doctrine or of discipline, nor was there any official authority, or any force more direct or weighty than personal influence.

There could not be a more decisive evidence of this than is to be found in the early and wide divergence of the various members of the Oxford Methodist Society after their brief association at the University came to an end. The Wesleys went their own way alone; their friend Whitefield made a separate orbit of revivalistic movement for himself. John Clayton, one of the closest and most esteemed Oxford comrades of the Wesleys, settled at Manchester, renounced the Wesleys after they began their evangelical movement, and remained an unbending High Churchman, of Jacobite proclivities, to the end of his days. Benjamin Ingham became a great evangelist in Yorkshire, founded societies, and with his societies or churches, took the decisive step of leaving the Church of England and embracing the position of avowed Dissent. The saintly Gambold, a poet as well as a theologian and preacher, became a Moravian bishop. James Hervey was in after life a famous evangelical clergyman holding "Low" and Calvinistic views. These were the chief of the Methodists of Oxford. Oxford Methodism, in fact, came to an utter end in 1735.

Of Wesley's personal character and influence as the leader of the Oxford Methodists there happily remains a portrait drawn by the hand of his friend and fellow Methodist, Gambold. After describing how he became acquainted, in the first place, with Charles Wesley, how Charles Wesley took him to his brother, and the profound deference and unbounded affection that

Charles ever showed towards John, Gambold thus proceeds :—

"Mr. John Wesley was always the chief manager, for which he was very fit. For he had not only more learning and experience than the rest, but he was blessed with such activity as to be always gaining ground, and such steadiness that he lost none; what proposals he made to any were sure to alarm them, because he was so much in earnest; nor could they afterward slight them, because they saw him always the same. What supported this uniform vigour was the care he took to consider well of every affair before he engaged in it, making all his decisions in the fear of God, without passion, humour, or self-confidence; for though he had naturally a very clear apprehension, yet his exact prudence depended more on honesty and singleness of heart. To this I may add that he had, I think, something of authority in his countenance. Yet he never assumed any to himself above his companions; any of them might speak their mind, and their wishes were as strictly regarded by him as his by them. . . .

"He thought prayer to be more his business than anything else, and I have often seen him come out of his closet with a serenity that was next to shining; it discovered where he had been and gave me double hope of receiving wise direction in the matter about which I came to consult him. . . . He used many arts to *be* religious, but none to *seem* so; with a soul always upon the stretch and a most transparent sincerity, he addicted himself to every good word and work. . . ."

There can be no doubt that this portrait strikingly depicts Wesley's distinctive personality.

Wesley's father died in the spring of 1735 (25th April). His illness had lasted eight months, during which period at least, if not before, "he enjoyed," as

John Wesley testified, "a clear sense of his acceptance with God." "I heard him express it," says his son, writing in 1748, "more than once, although at that time I understood it not. 'The inward witness, son, the inward witness,' said he to me, 'that is the proof, the strongest proof of Christianity.' And when I asked him (the time of his change drawing nigh), 'Sir, are you in much pain?' he answered aloud with a smile, 'God does chasten me with pain; yea, all my bones with strong pain; but I thank Him for all, I bless Him for all, I love Him for all!'"

To his son Charles he said, more than once, "Be steady. The Christian faith will surely revive in this kingdom; you shall see it, though I shall not." In this spirit he remained to the end. "Now you have done all," he said to his son John, at the close of the commendatory prayer, after the final administration of the Lord's Supper. These were his last words.

It had been the desire of the father and of the family that John Wesley should succeed to the living of Epworth, and keep a home for the mother and unmarried sisters at the rectory. To his widowed mother and to his sisters John Wesley was all his life through dutiful and generous. He provided better for them, there can be no doubt, than he would have been able to do at Epworth. He had felt, when the matter was urged upon him, that it was not his providential vocation to remain secluded in a remote country parsonage, or to give his days to farming his glebe. And when he had reluctantly consented to entertain the proposal, it was found that, in consequence of his "Methodist" peculiarities, he was considered unfit for the preferment. Retaining his fellowship, therefore, which enabled him to help his family, he determined to accept the opportunity afforded to him, in part, at least, through the influence of General Oglethorpe, a warm friend of his family, of going out to Georgia as a missionary.

It was a mission in which his father had felt deeply interested, and which, if he had been a younger man, he said that he would have volunteered to take. John, accordingly, sailed from Gravesend for Georgia, under the auspices of the Society for the Propagation of the Gospel in Foreign Parts, on 21st October 1735. His brother left with him and proceeded to Georgia as a sort of chaplain and private secretary to General Oglethorpe.

Two features of Wesley's strange and perplexed history in Georgia are very noteworthy; one that he carried his rubrical punctilios and his High Church practices to the uttermost extreme; the other that his mission was a total failure.

Nevertheless, Wesley learnt much in Georgia, and still more, perhaps, in his voyages to and fro. On his voyage out he met with pious Moravians, whose deportment and whose inward experience, as he learnt it from conversation with them, filled him with astonishment. Their steadfast peace, and their superiority to all fear of death, were a mystery to him. What he most felt his want of they seemed to possess. He met with godly Presbyterians also, after his arrival on the Continent, who gave him his first lesson in regard to public extemporary prayer. His journal seems to show that, notwithstanding his extreme High Churchmanship—all the more extreme, perhaps, for his entire renunciation of mysticism—he was inwardly beginning to change, even before he left Georgia. And it is certain that during his voyage home a very great change was wrought in him. Wesley was not quite two years in America. But he returned to England a very changed character, a "wiser" if a "sadder man." Before he landed again on his native shore—which he did on 1st February 1738, at Deal—he had so far learned the meaning of Scripture, and the lessons of his own experience, as to be truly and deeply convinced of sin and spiritual helplessness—his Pharisaism was broken up—and as, further, to have come to a clear understanding and conviction that justification and salvation were to be obtained only through faith in the Lord Jesus Christ. But what that faith meant he did not yet know. "One thing," he says, "have I learnt in the end of the earth, that I who went to America to convert the Indians, was never converted myself." He had learnt this, but the way of salvation he had not learnt.

Nor did he learn it until he met with Peter Böhler, the Moravian teacher, who was at this time staying in England to obtain a passage to the very colony Wesley had just left. Notwithstanding the deep and searching experience through which he had been brought, step after step, the spiritual insensibility which infected the whole atmosphere of moral thought in England during that age, still, as to this point, clung fast to him. He had no other idea of Christian faith than as a sincere belief of the Christian creeds and acceptance of the authority of Scripture and the Church, operating morally but altogether naturally on the opinions and character of the believer. Of faith as an essentially spiritual act and habit of the heart and soul, exercised under special Divine influence, he had no conception whatever.

It was Peter Böhler who proved to him out of Scripture that faith was such a spiritual act and habit of Divine operation. After repeated lessons, Wesley was thoroughly convinced at last on Sunday, 5th March 1738. He writes in his journal for that day: "By whom"—Böhler—"in the hand of the great God, I was clearly convinced of unbelief, of the want of that faith whereby alone we are saved." Having learnt this hard lesson, he determined to act on his teacher's advice, "Preach faith, till you have it; and then because you have it, you will preach faith."

On the 3rd of May his brother Charles, who had been much disturbed by the change in his brother's views, was at length convinced of the truth of the Moravian teacher's doctrine. "My brother," says John Wesley, in his journal for that day, "had a long and particular conversation with Peter Böhler. And it now pleased God to open his eyes; so that he also saw clearly what was the nature of that one true living faith, whereby alone, 'through grace, we are saved.'"

The next day Peter Böhler left London, in order to embark for Carolina, and Wesley makes the following very remarkable entry in his journal: "Oh! what a work hath God begun since his coming into England; such an one as shall never come to an end till heaven and earth pass away."

It was at a private meeting of a religious society in Aldersgate Street, on Wednesday, 24th May 1738, that Wesley was enabled to exercise a true Gospel faith in Jesus Christ as his Saviour.

One was reading Luther's *Preface to the Epistle to the Romans*, in which the Reformer describes the change which God works in the heart through faith in Christ. Listening heedfully, prayerfully, for to him the subject was one of life or death, the truth as to Christ and the sinner's salvation, as to the personal relation of the Saviour to the sinner, broke in upon his soul. "I felt my heart," he says, "strangely warmed; I felt I did trust in Christ, Christ alone, for salvation; and an assurance was given me that He had taken away my sins, even mine, and saved me from the law of sin and death." From this time Wesley could use for himself the language of St. Paul, "I live; yet not I, but Christ liveth in me: and the life which I now live in the flesh I live by the faith of the Son of God, who loved me, and gave Himself for me." (Gal. ii. 20.)

This earlier history of Wesley, to a truly spiritual man, is more interesting than any part of the great history that follows, because here, at its crisis and culmination, is the very spring and fountain of the life and power through which the wonderful achievements of Wesley's after life were accomplished, and through which alone it was possible that they should be accomplished.

He had passed through formalism, legalism, and ceremonialism, and not found life or peace. Following his master Law, he had resorted to the fountains of mysticism, but had proved that the deeper he drank the more disturbed and dissatisfied his spirit became, until at length he finally abandoned them. His lifelong verdict was that the depths of mysticism, as he had tested them, were "Behmenish, void, and vain." In this condition, outwardly an Anglican of the extreme Laudian school, inwardly full of endless perplexities—"a restless seeker after rest"—Wesley had gone to America, only to find that his presentation of Christianity utterly broke down when brought into contact with life's naked realities. He offended, without awakening, the colonists. He had no gospel wherewith to reach the Indian's soul. Abased and broken down in spirit, he returns to England a true penitent, feeling after faith, but without any idea of its nature; and, finally, through the teaching, first of the German Moravian Böhler, and then of the living words of the long dead German Reformer, Luther, he is brought into the full faith, the true life and liberty, and the loving evangelical holiness of Christ's kingdom.

Wesley himself, indeed, in after life, took a less severe view of his own state and character before his "conversion" than he did at the time of that critical experience. He would not, in 1770, have maintained, as he affirmed in 1738, that he was an unconverted man during all the time that he was in Georgia. But to his life's end he held that he was in many, and in most important respects, an unenlightened man. Nor is it possible to understand in the least his after life, unless it be apprehended that in 1738 a very great and critical change passed in his experience, and one which transformed, in many ways, his character for all his following course.

From henceforth Wesley is a new man. The Oxford Methodist is radically renewed. He may still be called a Methodist in years to come, but he can no longer be an Oxford Methodist. He is a "new creature in Christ Jesus." His conversion made Wesley an evangelist. He had a forgotten gospel to preach—the gospel by which men were to be converted, as he had been, and to become "new creatures." This result, this new birth, he had learnt once for all, was not dependent on any priestly prerogative or service, or on any sacramental grace or influence. "Faith cometh by hearing, and hearing by the Word of God." To raise up, accordingly, by his preaching and personal influence, a body of converted men who should themselves become witnesses of the same truth by which he himself had been saved, was henceforth to be Wesley's life-work. This was the inspiration under which he became a mighty preacher, a flaming evangelist, a "burning and shining light."

Wesley's evangelical doctrines were not new in

England or the Church of England. They were only the old Gospel, and were essentially identical with the teaching and preaching of the Reformers—English as well as Continental—of the Puritans, and of the Homilists of the English Church. But they were new and startling in that earlier Georgian period of spiritual torpor. The clergy were offended, and became alarmed at the immense popularity of the preacher. Soon the churches were shut against him.

Accordingly, in 1739, Wesley followed the example already set him, a little while before, by his former pupil at Oxford, George Whitefield, and preached in the open air to immense crowds, first near Bristol, afterwards in or near London, and elsewhere. In 1739, also, he became possessed of an old building in Moorfields, called the "Foundery," and transformed it into a meeting and preaching house. About the same time in Bristol, and the neighbouring colliery-district of Kingswood, he felt obliged to become the owner much against his will at first, of premises for the purpose of public preaching and religious meetings. Here was the beginning of that vast growth of preaching-houses and meeting-rooms, all of them for nearly fifty years settled on Wesley himself, which became afterwards through Wesley, the property of the Methodist Connection.

The society which Wesley established at the Foundery in 1739—near to where City Road Chapel now stands—was the first society under the direct control of Wesley, and herein was the actual and vital beginning of the "Methodist Society," that is, of Wesleyan Methodism and all its kindred churches. Hence the Wesleyan Methodists celebrated their centenary in 1839.

In 1743 Wesley published the rules of this Society.

His brother Charles's name was joined with his own at the foot of these rules in their second edition, dated 1st May 1743, and so remained in all later editions while Charles Wesley lived. Those rules are still the rules of Wesleyan Methodism, so far as relates to membership of the Church. Since Wesley's death they have not been altered. In 1742 the societies were divided into classes, each class being placed under the charge of a "leader." The class-leaders of Methodism, together with the local stewards, became in course of time, and have remained for nearly a century past, the ordinary disciplinary council in every society.

From first to last there is no trace or colour of any Anglican character in the organisation of Wesley's society or societies—for the societies collectively constituted "the Methodist Society," or the "United Society." Moravians or Dissenters might have entered the fellowship, and, before long, many did enter it who had either been Dissenters or, at any rate, had seldom or never entered a parish church. What would to-day be called the "unsectarian" character of his society was indeed, in Wesley's view, one of its chief glories. All the time, however, this "unsectarian" society was only another sect, in process of formation. And, indeed, Wesley himself, for many years before his death, had seen that, unless the rulers of the Church should come to adopt in regard to his preachers and preaching-houses a liberal policy of recognition, this might be the outcome of his life-work. Nor did he, in his latest years, shrink with any repugnance from the prospect; rather at the last he would appear to have even rejoiced in it.

Very early, indeed, Wesley had been driven, sorely against his will, to make a distinct separation of his societies in London and at Bristol from the Church of

England. The clergy not only excluded the Wesleys from their pulpits, but often repelled both them and their converts from the Lord's Table. This was first done on a large scale, and with systematic harshness and persistency at Bristol in 1740. The brothers believed that they had no alternative but to administer the Sacrament themselves in their own preaching-rooms.

The practice having thus been established at Bristol, the original society at the Foundery naturally claimed the like privilege, the more so as too many of the London clergy acted towards Wesley's followers in the same manner as those at Bristol. These administrations, once begun, were afterwards steadily maintained, one of the Wesleys, or else some co-operative or friendly clergyman, being always present, whether in London or at Bristol, to take the service. Both on Sundays and on week-days, in these first centres of Methodist work and influence, full provision was made for the spiritual wants of the societies, quite apart from the services of the Church of England. The only link with that Church was that the sacramental administrators were clergymen.

In 1741 Wesley began to employ lay-preachers. The story is well known how he hastened up to London from Bristol to put an end to his schoolmaster Maxfield's preaching at the Foundery. He took his venerable mother's wise advice, however, and heard Maxfield preach himself. Thenceforth lay-preaching became a Methodist institution. One High Church prejudice after another was giving way; and this circumstance registers the last struggle of one of these prejudices. Wesley could by no means have done his work without his lay-itinerants; he would have been as helpless as a general without officers. These itinerant preachers, stationed, from year to year, in wide "circuits," conducted the simple services in the Methodist preaching-rooms, and were, in effect, as to most points, the spiritual pastors and guides of the societies. But they did not administer the Sacraments, for the reception of which the members had to go to Church, if they were allowed to have them there, or else to wait—often for long months or even years—for the coming round of Wesley or his brother Charles, or, in later years, of Dr. Coke. Long before Wesley's death, however, there was a growing desire among the societies, especially as the itinerant preachers improved in quality and faculty, to have the Sacraments administered by their own preachers. This came to pass universally after Wesley's death, and he himself took steps in the later years of his life which prepared the way for it.

In the beginning of 1738 Wesley had been a High Churchman; and even after his conversion in that year he continued for several years to hold in the abstract High Church views as to points ecclesiastical. But in 1746 he abandoned once for all his ecclesiastical High Churchmanship. He relates in his journal, under date 20th January 1746, how his views were changed by reading Lord (Chancellor) King's account of the primitive Church. From this time forward he consistently maintained that "the uninterrupted succession was a fable which no man ever did or could prove." One of the convictions derived by him at this time from reading Lord King's book was that the office of bishop was originally one and the same with that of presbyter; and the practical inference drawn by Wesley was that he himself was a "Scriptural Episcopos," and that he had as much right as any primitive or missionary bishop to ordain ministers, as his representatives and helpers, who should administer the Sacraments instead of himself to the societies which had placed themselves under his spiritual charge.

This right, as he conceived it to be, he was often moved to exercise, that he might satisfy the needs and outcries of his societies; but he refrained until he felt it was impossible to resist the call of Providence on behalf of the American Methodist Societies. In 1784 when the Colonies had become an independent nation, Wesley ordained his trusted friend and helper Dr. Coke, a clergyman of the Church of England, as superintendent ('Επίσκοπος) for America, where Coke ordained Francis Asbury presbyter and also superintendent, and where Coke and Asbury together ordained the American preachers as presbyters. Thus American Methodism was constituted an independent church. To-day the Methodism of America, taken collectively, is the largest aggregate of national Protestantism in the world.

The following year (1785) Wesley ordained Methodist ministers for Scotland. In 1786 he ordained a minister for Antigua and another for Newfoundland. A number of other preachers were ordained by him during the next three years.

In 1784 Wesley had legally defined his yearly Conference. His preachers had been accustomed for forty years to meet with him in annual Council or "Conference." To "the Conference"—consisting legally of a hundred ministers, chosen and appointed by name, who themselves are required to fill up the vacancies in their number from year to year—the legal instrument or Deed of Declaration of 1784 gives supreme jurisdiction as to the appointment of preachers to the chapels of the Connexion, and as to the admission and expulsion of ministers. In practice all the powers, whether original or acquired, of the Conference have, since

Wesley's death, been shared by all the ministers attending the yearly sessions of the Conference, whether members of the "Legal Hundred" or not.

Wesley could not have done his wonderful life-work but for an extraordinary combination of qualities, physical and intellectual, as well as moral and spiritual. Notwithstanding his vast correspondence and voluminous authorship, it has been calculated that he usually travelled—always on horseback till he was nearly seventy years of age—four thousand five hundred miles a year.

His day's work began with preaching at five o'clock in the morning, and he preached two, three, or sometimes even four sermons a day. To ride from sixty to seventy miles, besides preaching at least twice, and this day after day, was an ordinary performance with him.

There were times when he went far beyond this measure. He tells us, on one occasion, that after riding from Bawtry to Epworth, not by the direct road, which was under water, a distance of "more than ninety miles," he "was little more tired than when he rose in the morning." Another time in Scotland he reached Cupar, "after travelling near ninety miles," and found "no weariness at all." When he was near seventy years of age he was obliged to discontinue riding on horseback; but in other respects his energy and endurance remained unimpaired till a much later age. A sudden call to Bristol reached him at Congleton when he was seventy-one years old. He took chaise to Bristol, gave two hours to his business, and immediately returned to Congleton, having done the distance of 280 miles and his business in little more than forty-eight hours, and "no more tired," he records, than when he set out.

His person was small, spare, and sinewy, perfectly proportioned and made for activity. His features were striking—the nose somewhat aquiline, the lips firm, the mouth mobile and handsome, the eyes bright and vivid, now piercing, now commanding, and again sympathetic. His complexion was very beautiful—fair, clear, and somewhat ruddy; his forehead was fine and fully developed; his brown hair was soft and long with a natural curl. Contrary to the fashion of the time, he wore it without a wig until his later years.

As a thinker he was acute, consecutive, and systematic. He was a remarkably keen and skilful logician. At Oxford his reputation was high as a scholar; but it was highest as a logician. He was a wide and various reader all his life, and his *Appeals to Men of Reason and Religion*, as well as some of his sermons, show how his mind had been enriched and enlarged by the philosophical studies of his earlier life. On the purely intellectual side of his nature, and especially when dealing with matters of taste or questions of history, he was severely critical, and, indeed, often sceptical, as is shown by many passages in his journals and his letters, while on the spiritual side he was candid, open, charitable, and sometimes—particularly as to what seemed to be "other-world" facts or phenomena—credulous.

His preaching, which must not be judged by his published sermons, was, as to the present phrase and colour and tone of his utterances, almost always truly extemporaneous. He and his audience were in living contact and sympathy with each other, mind with mind, and not only face to face. Perhaps his most distinctive and unfailing characteristics were the transparent clearness of his exposition, and the direct and searching force of his application. His manner was always perfectly simple and natural; at the same time he spoke with a calm authority, a serene commanding force, a sustained power, free from all spasmodic fervours, yet sometimes vehement in its intensity, which combined to mark him out as a preacher altogether unique in style and character. No words could be plainer than his, no style less ambitious; of descriptive or dramatic eloquence he had nothing; yet his phrases flew like bolts, and his applications and appeals often overwhelmed his hearers as with a sudden overthrow, or struck them straight to the heart, so that men and women "dropped down as dead."

The triumphs of Wesley's ministry were perhaps greatest in Cornwall. Before he visited that county it was the abode of a people ignorant, barbarous, and reckless, almost beyond belief. Christian civilisation seemed scarcely to have touched them. Under his preaching and that of his brother, and their lay evangelists, the character of the county was radically and permanently transformed. It has now for many generations been noted for the religious and Christian character of the population. The work which, under Providence, he accomplished in Newcastle and among the dales of Northumberland, Durham, and North Yorkshire is not so celebrated, but was almost as remarkable in its character and results as the work in Cornwall. The whole region has retained a deep savour of earnest and practical Christianity to this day. Wonderful, also, were the successes of his ministry among the barbarous population of what is now known as "the black country," and among the colliers of Kingswood. Nor did the work of his life die out or even decline. The revival, as he delighted often to say, continued and increased under his eye and under his hand for more than half a century.

The personal influence of Wesley and the kingly authority which seemed to belong to him are among the most marked characteristics of the man. Even in the beginning at Oxford, as we have seen, he always led those with whom he came into contact; and this magnetic power belonged to him through life. It was, however, greatly increased after his conversion. In the midst of a mob "I called," Wesley writes, "for a chair; the winds were hushed, and all was calm and still; my heart was filled with love, my eyes with tears, and my mouth with arguments. They were amazed; they were ashamed; they were melted down; they devoured every word."

One of the griefs of Wesley's life was the difference, and, for a while, controversy between Whitefield and himself in regard to the questions of election and predestination. But the two great evangelists were not very long in agreeing to differ. They loved each other dearly. Whitefield appointed Wesley his executor, and Wesley preached Whitefield's funeral sermon.

Wesley's old age was in all respects remarkable. The once proscribed and reviled evangelist came to be the object of almost universal honour. The churches had been shut to him for nearly half a century; but at length they were opened to him on every hand. Bishops paid him reverence, clergy flocked to hear him and to take part with him in administering the Lord's Supper. His strength, too, his activity, the bright intelligence of his faculties, seemed to be almost preternatural.

Not until he reached his eighty-fifth year do we find an intimation of any of the infirmities which belong to old age. But the charm of his old age was its happiness and goodness. Alexander Knox, the friend of Southey, had been his friend for thirty years, and has furnished a description of his old age, which forms a fine counterpart to Mr. Gambold's picture of him at Oxford as he was fifty years before.

"It would be far too little to say," writes Mr. Knox, "that it was impossible to suspect him of any moral taint, for it was obvious that every movement bespoke as perfect a contrariety to all that was earthly or animal as could be imagined in a mortal being. His countenance, as well as conversation, expressed an habitual gaiety of heart, which nothing but conscious virtue and innocence could have bestowed. My acquaintance with him has done more to teach me what a heaven upon earth is implied in the maturity of Christian piety, than all I have elsewhere seen or heard or read, except in the sacred volume." It is no wonder that such a man was welcome among the pure and good of all ages and of every circle, or that children especially loved and delighted in him as he loved and delighted in them.

His death was in harmony with his life. "The best of all is God is with us" were almost his last words. And the last hymn that he sang, and tried once again to sing when very near his end, was the one which begins—

> I'll praise my Maker while I've breath,
> And when my voice is lost in death,
> Praise shall employ my nobler powers ;
> My days of praise shall ne'er be past
> While life and thought and being last,
> Or immortality endures.

He died on 2nd March 1791, being eighty-seven years old. He had preached his last sermon on Wednesday the 23rd of February. He wrote his last letter on Saturday the 26th. It was addressed to

William Wilberforce, and was an exhortation to him to persevere in his public efforts against the slave-trade. His last word was a simple "farewell," addressed to his old companion Joseph Bradford, one of his most faithful and best trusted preachers.

CHARLES WESLEY.

CHARLES WESLEY

(1708–1788)

By
Benjamin Gregory, D.D.

CHARLES WESLEY holds an unchallenged place amongst the greatest hymn-writers of the Christian Church. The most competent judges of the most opposite theological schools—Dr. Watts, the precentor of the Nonconformist psalmody, and John Keble,[1] the most classic of the High Church lyrists—hail him as the leader of their choir. He has, moreover, the decisive suffrage of the alternative first or second place. Whoever else may be accounted first, Charles Wesley's name invariably comes next.

Charles, the youngest son, and the eighteenth child, of the Rev. Samuel Wesley, M.A., was born at Epworth on 29th December (N.S.) 1708, five years later than his still more famous brother, John. Charles came into the world prematurely; the future hymn-writer and evangelist lay for weeks wrapped up in soft wool, with closed eyes, and without uttering a sound. Before he was two months old, the memorable incendiary fire occurred which on a wild winter's night burnt down the rectory, in the flames of which little Jacky Wesley all but perished.

Having survived the fire and the frost of that February night, Charles Wesley spent in the remote river-island the first seven years of a life that was to be so stirring and itinerant. His highly intellectual, accomplished, and devoted mother had the task of training the young minstrel's opening mind, and moulding his character. There was little in the level landscape on which the Epworth parsonage looked down to awake poetic genius, unless to Charles Wesley, as to his fellow-countyman, Lord Tennyson—

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[1] *British Critic*, 1840.

A willowed swamp
Rivalled the beauty of Italian skies.

The sluggish Idle and Milton's "gulfy Don" were within the range of a holiday ramble, if any such he had; and across the cultured flats could be seen the glitter of the broadening Trent, which here—

Like some earth-born giant, spreads
His thirty arms along the indented meads.

In autumn, the graceful, delicate blue flowers of the flax-fields would refresh his eye. His father's placid verse reflects the moist treeless scenery, where—

Morning greets the skies
With rosy cheeks, and humid eyes,

and the birds "build on the green turf their mossy nests," overhung by "the low liquid sky." The rivers are invoked as—

Nurses of soft dreams:
Reedy brooks, and winding streams;
Where, through matted sedge, you creep
Travelling to your parent deep.
—"Hymn to the Creator."

But Charles was not a descriptive poet, and was much less susceptible to the charms of Nature than his brother John.

Charles spent less than three years under his mother's schooling, though more than seven under her effective training. The children were not set to learn the alphabet till they were full five years old, and Charles was not yet eight when Samuel Wesley, junior, who was second master at the great school of Westminster, undertook his youngest brother's maintenance and education.

It was a wonderful experience for the imaginative, sensitive little genius, when he emerged from the seclusion of his home at Epworth and made that slow, yet to him swift-seeming, journey of a hundred and fifty miles, to "royal-towered" Westminster. He must have been thinking of this first crisis of his life when he wrote the tender hymn which comes next to that "For a Child Cutting his Teeth," that "For Sending a Child to the Boarding School":—

Not without Thy direction
  From us our child we send,
And unto Thy protection
  His innocence commend.
Jesus, Thou Friend and Lover
  Of helpless infancy,
With wings of mercy cover
  A soul bestowed by Thee, etc.

At the beginning of the eighteenth century Westminster took a still higher rank than now amongst the great public schools of England. It was no slight advantage to Charles Wesley to be under the tutelage of his brilliant brother Samuel, who was seventeen years his senior; and to whom he looked up with veneration as born in an earlier century. He was scarcely less favoured in having his brother John as a neighbour, who was then, and for three years after, a scholar at the Charterhouse. Charles spent ten years at Westminster—five at the school, and five at St. Peter's

College, as "King's scholar," his brother being thus relieved of his expenses. His ingenuous, noble-natured gratitude for education at the cost of the beneficent is shown in one of his earliest publications—*Hymns for Charity Children* (1741):—

With what resembling care and love
  Both worlds for us appear
Our friendly guardians!—those above,
  Our benefactors here.

Blessings—the payment of the poor—
  Our lips and hearts return.

At Westminster Charles displayed the physical fearlessness and British pluck which stood him in such good stead in his evangelistic perils. A Scotch lad, William Murray, who was very badly treated by his schoolfellows because his father had sided with the Pretender, was valorously championed by the son of the Lincolnshire parson. When Pope's "silver-tongued Murray" became Chief Justice, and Earl of Mansfield, he thankfully remembered this early obligation to Charles Wesley.

Whilst at Westminster, Charles Wesley had what his brother John called "a fair escape" from becoming a man of wealth and high social rank. Garrett Wesley, Esq., M.P., of Dungan, Ireland, having large estates, but no child, and being nearly sixty years of age, wrote to Samuel Wesley, senior, offering to adopt his son Charles and make him his heir. Much correspondence ensued between father and son; and an Irish gentleman, supposed to be Garrett Wesley himself, visited Charles at Westminster, and pressed upon him the acceptance of the heirship. This did not accord, however, with Charles's life-plan; and, being left to his own judgment, he declined the overture. Thereupon Garrett Wesley adopted his cousin, Richard Colley, of Dublin, on condition of his assuming the name of Wesley. Richard Colley's son, Garrett Colley Wesley, became Earl of Mornington, and was the father of Richard Wesley, Governor-General of India, created Marquis of Wellesley; and of Arthur Wesley, the great Duke of Wellington.[1]

In 1726, Charles Wesley, in his eighteenth year, went up to Christ Church, Oxford, where he spent nine years.

These nineteen years of classic training left deep, bright traces on Charles Wesley's hymns. In a letter, written soon after he first found himself at Westminster, he says that he has come there "to be bred a scholar." And a scholar he was bred. His father was a scholar, and an author of some reputation, both in prose and verse; and his mother's vigorous and graceful mind was richly cultivated. His brother Samuel was a recognised scholar, wit, epigrammatist, and poet, moving in the highest literary circle, counting Pope, Addison, Prior, Attenbury, and Lord Oxford amongst his personal friends. He, too, wrote imperishable hymns, as well as the exquisite lyric, "The morning flowers display their sweets." At Westminster Charles Wesley also passed under the hands of Vincent Bourne, the deftest, liveliest, most tasteful, and most charming of English masters of Latin poetry, who was then in his prime, and not the listless, slip-shod teacher he had become in Cowper's day. Charles Wesley's genius richly repaid his classic cultivation. His English is at once idiomatic, vernacular, and scholarly. He modestly depreciates his own style in comparison with that of his most popular contemporaries :—

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[1] Wellington's name in the Army List for 1800 is "the Hon. Arthur Wesley." "Wellesley" is a recurrence to an older form of the name of which "Wesley" is a contraction. The first member of the family known to history held lands near the city of Wells, in Somerset.

Could I like rapid Young aspire,
Transported on his car of fire,
Or flow with academic ease
Smooth as our own Isocrates.

But his English has much more the "flow" of "academic ease," as well as of the strength and purity of the antique models, than that of the author of the "Meditations in a Flower Garden" and "Amongst the Tombs," to whom he makes this affectionate allusion.

Charles Wesley's spiritual state when, in his eighteenth year, he went to Oxford, is thus described by his brother John :—"He pursued his studies diligently, and led a regular, harmless life ; but if I spoke to him about religion, he would warmly answer, 'What ! would you have me to be a saint all at once ?' and would hear no more. At that time his ideal was to be, like his eldest brother, a scholar, a wit, a churchman, and a gentleman. Saintship was to supervene on churchmanship, in due course."

Yet Charles Wesley was the originator, though John was the organiser, of Oxford Methodism. It was in 1729, when Charles was not yet quite of age, and John was away acting as his father's curate, that Charles, having taken his degree of B.A., and his position as college-tutor, began a course of such systematic study, such strict conformity to the university statutes, such scrupulous attendance on the services of the Church, and such regularity and precision in the disposal of his time, as to present a reproving contrast to the habits of his compeers, and to win for himself the nickname *Method-ist.*

This *first* stage of his conversion was singularly gentle ; for the conversion of both the brothers had two stages, so marked that they might be designated *dispensations.* In the first stage, each "came to himself"; in the second, each came to his Father's arms. Charles, in the letter to his brother announcing the great change that had come over him, confesses his inability to trace it to any direct instrumentality. "It is owing in great measure to somebody's prayers (my mother's, most likely) that I am come to think as I do; for I cannot tell myself *how* or *when* I awoke out of my lethargy." But, no doubt, his own experience is reflected in the powerful hymn:—

Thou great, mysterious God, unknown,
Whose love has gently led me on,
Even from my infant days!

as well as in the verse:—

I sing of Thy grace,
From my earliest days,
Ever near to allure and defend, etc.

Charles soon became the nucleus of a small "society" of godly young gownsmen, who shared his principles, and his reproach. When, however, John Wesley, returning to Oxford, joined the little brotherhood, he was at once recognised as its directive mind. Besides his natural gifts of leadership, he was more than five years older than Charles, had been six years longer at the university, and was Fellow of a college. Charles, in the letter just quoted, had already put himself under his brother's direction.

Charles Wesley must, in all justice, be acknowledged as a co-founder of Methodism. Whitefield distinctly attributes his conversion to the instrumentality of the younger brother. The duality of the Foundership is plain. Each brother was the other's complement. In them we see the union of argumentation cool and close, and administration, firm, calm, wise, and loving, with poetic passion. They were the Moses and Aaron of the new exodus; the Jachin and Boaz of the new spiritual temple. The one bold stride of field- and street-preaching was to each at once the Jabbok and the Rubicon; and Charles was the first to take it. The younger brother had, indeed, more initiative than the elder. He was also the first to administer the Lord's Supper to Methodists separately, and in an unconsecrated place. It is a beautifully significant fact that at least ten volumes of *Hymns and Psalms* were published in the joint names of John and Charles Wesley; so that in many cases it is impossible to determine by which a particular hymn was written.

The brothers spent the six years 1729-1735 in the conscientious discharge of their tutorial duties, in the humblest philanthropic labours, and in the earnest study of the Scriptures and cultivation of the spiritual life in association with the Godly Club. In 1735 they crossed the Atlantic together as missionaries of the Society for the Propagation of the Gospel; Charles as chaplain-secretary to General Oglethorpe, governor of the new colony of Georgia, and as parish priest of Frederica. Shortly before embarkation he was ordained—in his twenty-eighth year. During their sixteen weeks' voyage the young clergymen's whole time was utilised in the most *Methodistic* manner, in "doing or receiving good."

At Frederica, Charles devoted himself to his pastoral work with the utmost assiduity, holding four services a day, and being indefatigable in the individual oversight of his flock. Yet his want of success was most disheartening. His fidelity and earnestness procured him more enemies than hearers, insomuch that his life was attempted more than once. He was fired at, in his favourite meditative "myrtle-walk in the woods." The truth is, the devoted brothers had not yet found the secret of personal happiness and ministerial success.

Nevertheless, Frederica proved no bad training-ground for his appointed work. There being no church, he was obliged to conduct service "under the shade of trees," or in the shed "where the public stores were kept." This was his first practice in preaching out of doors, and in unconsecrated places. His lodging was in a leaky hut, compared with which the wood and plaster rectory in which he was born was like an archi-episcopal palace. His furniture did not include a tea-kettle or even "boards to lie on." Much of his time was spent at "the camp," for invasion was expected daily, seven Spanish men-of-war having anchored at the mouth of the river waiting for a favourable wind. But his humour never failed him. He writes: "I begin to be abused and slighted into an opinion of my own considerableness. I could not be more trampled upon was I a fallen minister of State. I sometimes diverted myself with their odd expressions of contempt, but found the benefit of having undergone a much lower degree of contempt at Oxford." But strength and valour both gave way. He writes: "My outward hardships and inward conflict—

"down
At last have borne my boasted courage."

"A friendly fever" put him quite *hors de combat.* "When my fever was somewhat abated, I was led out to bury the scout-boat man (killed by the burst of a cannon) and envied him his quiet grave." Such was the despondency of a man who had before him more than half a century of intense, exultant, successful, and abiding work! His fever returned, accompanied by dysentery, yet he "was obliged to go abroad and preach and give the sacrament." His text, chosen from the Prayer-Book version of the Psalms, "Keep innocency and take heed to the thing that is right, for that shall bring a man peace at the last," "was interpreted as a satire against Mrs. H——." At last his congregation dwindled to "two Presbyterians and a Papist."

Oglethorpe at length resolved not to await the attack of the Spaniards, but to contest their landing. The old soldier-statesman sent for Charles Wesley, and said: "I am now going to death. You will see me no more." He then gave Charles a diamond ring, as at once a token, a testimonial, and memento. To Oglethorpe's remark "that he much desired the conversion of the heathen, and believed my brother intended it," Charles Wesley gave this notable reply: "But I believe it will never be under your patronage, for then men would account for it without God." But the Spaniards, after three weeks waiting on the wind, betook themselves elsewhere. Charles then accompanied Oglethorpe to Savannah and took his brother's work. The man who afterwards preached fearlessly to threatening thousands, writes: "The hardest duty imposed upon me was to expound the lessons to a hundred hearers. I was surprised at my own confidence, and acknowledged it not my own."

In July 1736 he was sent to England with despatches, in a wretched craft, with a more wretched captain. On embarking he was again prostrated by dysentery and fever. After six days at sea, they were obliged to run into Boston harbour, U.S., for repairs. Here his state was so critical that he was attended by three physicians. Nevertheless, he felt bound, as soon as the ship was ready, at all risks to hasten to England with his despatches. After a tempestuous and most trying voyage of two months, he landed at Deal in December.

His grateful sense of his many signal deliverances he poured forth in the hymn :—

God of my life, whose gracious power
  Through varied deaths my soul hath led :
Or turned aside the fatal hour,
  Or lifted up my sinking head ;

In all my ways Thy hand I own,
  Thy ruling providence I see ;
O ! help me still my course to run,
  And still direct my paths to Thee.

Oft from the margin of the grave
  Thou, Lord, hast lifted up my head ;
Sudden I found Thee near to save ;
  The fever owned Thy touch, and fled.

Oft hath the sea confessed Thy power
  And given me back to Thy command ;
It could not, Lord, my life devour,
  Safe in the hollow of Thy hand.

On partial recovery, he hastened to Oxford, to visit his Methodist friends, and the prisoners.

Through Lady Betty Hastings, Charles Wesley soon became acquainted with the godly aristocracy. He had also an audience with George II., and dined with the King and Queen at Hampton Court. He had interviews with Archbishop Potter, and the Bishops of London and Oxford. On his birthday, he described himself as "in a murmuring, discontented spirit" ; and on 22nd January 1737, finding a friend reading an announcement of his death, he writes : "Happy for me had the news been true." Whilst in this state, he wrote his "Hymn for Midnight," beginning :—

Fain would I leave this earth below,
  Of pain and sin the dark abode;
Where shadowy joy, or solid woe,
  Allures, or tears me from my God.

It ends, however, in the true Wesleyan key:—

Come quickly, Lord, Thy face display,
  And look my darkness into day.

Sorrow and sin and death are o'er,
  If Thou reverse "the creature's" doom;
Sad Rachel weeps her loss no more,
  If Thou, the God, the Saviour, come;
Of Thee possessed, in Thee we prove
The light, the life, the heaven of love.

He sought light from the solemn, earnest Mystic, William Law, who bade him farewell with this true saying: "Nothing *I* can either speak or write will do you any good."

But he had two other interviews far more important and influential than those with philosophical divine, prelate, archbishop, or royalty itself. Count Zinzendorf, just arrived from Germany, sent for Charles Wesley; and Peter Böhler, another Moravian, preparatory to going as a missionary to Georgia, "put himself under Charles Wesley's care to learn English." The pupil taught his tutor a yet nobler lesson. Charles Wesley was again laid low by alarming illness. When he seemed "on the point to die," Böhler asked him, "Do you hope to be saved?" Charles answered, "Yes." "For what reason do you hope it?" "Because I have used my best endeavours to serve God." "He shook his head, and said no more. I thought him very uncharitable, saying in my heart: Would he rob me of my endeavours? I have nothing else to trust to." Poor returned missionary! he knew he had no success to lean on.

That sad, silent, significant shake of Peter Böhler's head shattered all Charles Wesley's false foundation of salvation by "endeavours."

This illness barred his fully-intended return to Georgia—the doctor assuring him it would be certain death. During his three months' sojourn in England Peter Böhler most effectively taught the two brothers whose teaching was to influence, directly or indirectly, so many millions of souls. On his departure, Charles, still lying at the gates of death, was visited by one Bray, a working brazier, "a poor, ignorant mechanic who knows nothing but Christ." Under this man's teaching the highly-cultivated man of genius resolved to place himself, and was "carried in a chair" to his house in Little Britain. There he "first saw Luther *On the Galatians*," on reading which he writes: "I marvelled that we were so soon and so entirely removed from him that called us into the grace of Christ, unto another Gospel. Who would believe that our Church had been founded upon this important article of justification by faith alone!"

At last, in his sick-room in a narrow outlet from Smithfield, on Sunday, 21st May 1738, Charles Wesley could write, for the first time in his life, "I now found myself at peace with God." In this, too, the younger brother outstripped the elder, but only by three days. On the 24th of May, Charles makes this record: "Towards ten my brother was brought in triumph by a troop of our friends, and declared '*I believe.*'" The party then sang a hymn which Charles had composed the day after his own emancipation, to commemorate that grand event. It was probably the fine hymn containing the verse—

Long my imprisoned spirit lay
  Fast bound in sin and nature's night;

Thine eye diffused a quickening ray;
I woke! the dungeon flamed with light;
My chains fell off; my heart was free;
I rose, went forth, and followed Thee.

Charles Wesley was then in his thirtieth year. He obtained a curacy at Islington, but after preaching a sermon on the Fourth Commandment, he was prevented by force from entering the pulpit by the churchwardens. This was his last appointment in the English Church.

On Royal Oak Day, 1739, Charles Wesley having been refused the church, a farmer invited him to preach in his field, at Broadoaks, Essex. He "did so, to about five hundred, on 'Repent, for the kingdom of heaven is at hand.'" Two days after, at the "pressing invitation" of a Quaker, he preached at Thaxted to "many Quakers, and near seven hundred others." Thus began his long career of evangelisation. To the Archbishop's interdict and threat of excommunication, he replied by preaching the next Sunday to ten thousand people in Moorfields, London, from "Come unto Me all ye that labour," etc. The Sunday after that he took his turn at the University Church, Oxford, preaching on Justification by Faith. The next Sunday morning he preached again at Moorfields, to as large a gathering as before, and in the afternoon to "an immense multitude" on Kennington Common; with prodigious effect, so much had heart-peace improved his health. For the latter service he was indicted and heavily fined.

The next ten years he devoted, like his brother, to itinerant evangelism, through England, Wales, and Ireland.

In 1749 he married Miss Gwynne, a Welsh lady; his whole income being £100 a year, from the profits of his own and his brother's publications. For some months the newly-wedded pair itinerated on the same horse. But his health proving unequal to so much travelling and out-door preaching, Charles Wesley undertook the charge of the two largest Methodist Societies, those of London and Bristol, preaching daily, and making occasional evangelistic excursions, as far as Cornwall and Yorkshire. In 1771 he took up his permanent residence in London.

Charles Wesley's two sons, Charles and Samuel, developed marvellous musical genius, and devoted themselves to music as their profession. "Select concerts" were held in a large room in their father's house, attended by the Bishop of London, several noblemen and foreign ambassadors, and the octogenarian General Oglethorpe.

Among Charles Wesley's friends in London were Samuel Johnson and Hannah More. He kept up his early habit of prison-visiting. He died in St. Marylebone, 29th March 1788, in the eightieth year of his age. His holy dying was unconsciously described by himself, sixteen years before, in one of his boldest and tenderest productions, such as befits the Poet of Assurance in the form of supplication :—

Thou Who hast tasted death for me,
Indulge me in my fond request,
And let a worm prescribe to Thee
The manner of my final rest.

Walk with me through the dreadful shade ;
And, certified that Thou art mine,
My spirit, calm and undismayed,
I shall into Thy hands resign :

No anxious doubt, no guilty gloom,
Shall damp whom Jesu's presence cheers ;
My light, my life, my God, is come !
And glory in his face appears.

Charles Wesley's poetry was lyric, elegiac, and satiric. He owes much of the compactness, the precision, the grace, the ease and music of his verse to his familiarity with the best classic models. No other English poet has such a variety, few have such a mastery of metre. Metre and rhythm are matters of the first importance to a hymn; for a hymn proper is made to be *sung*. The original Greek *humnos* means both the air and the words (as in Hesiod). The tune and the hymn were made together, and were wedded and welded into one. Besides, most of Charles Wesley's hymns were made to be announced vocally before they were sung; in the first instance, by the poet himself. In the Iambic *Common* Metre—the metre of the old English ballad and carol—of "Chevy Chase" and "God rest you, merry gentlemen," it was impossible to surpass, it was glorious to come up to, Watts at his very best; whether in impetus and bound, as in "My God, the spring of all my joys"; or in gravity and grandeur, as in "O God, our Help in ages past"; or in breezy sweep, as of "the wafture of a world-wide wing," as in "Father, how wide Thy glory shines," or "Eternal Wisdom, Thee we praise." In this Watts, if he were not so unequal, would be quite unequalled. In the Iambic *Long* Metre, Charles Wesley bears the palm for stateliness of structure and majesty of movement. Of this his "Hymn to be Sung at Sea" is a fine example.

In its cheery, tripping form—that of Marlowe's "Come, dwell with me and be my love,"—he is equally at home: as in—

Come, sinners, to the Gospel-feast.

In *six-eights*, at least in his favourite form of it, Charles Wesley is unrivalled: witness "Come, O Thou Traveller unknown." In fact he and his brother (in his translations from the German) lifted that metre from the popular pathos of "Sweet William's Farewell," and "All in the Downs the fleet was moored," or the descriptive humour of Shakespeare's "When icicles hang on the wall," to a grand spiritual elevation.

In the second form of six-eights, he has Dryden's energy and loftiness, with none of Dryden's roughness. Take as proof his majestic version of the *Te Deum*, and his hymn on "To him that overcometh will I give to be a pillar in my house, to go out no more for ever":—

Saviour! on me the grace bestow
To trample on my final foe;
Conqueror of death, with Thee to rise,
And claim my station in the skies:
Fixed as the throne that ne'er can move,
A pillar in Thy church above.

As beautiful as useful, there
May I that weight of glory bear,
With all that finally o'ercome,
Supporters of the heavenly dome;
Of perfect holiness possessed,
For ever in Thy presence blest, etc.

His *Short* Metre, too, has a ringing resonance and a mighty march which has never been outdone; *e.g.:*

Soldiers of Christ, arise!
And put your armour on, etc.

Sometimes he makes its elastic feet to spring and clang "like hinds' feet on the high places," as in his—

We shall our time beneath
  Live out in cheerful hope;
And fearless pass the vale of death,
  And gain the mountain-top.

In the management of trochaic metres Charles

Wesley is equally deft. Of the metre "sevens" he brings out all the varied capability. In the universally adopted "Jesu, Lover of my soul,"—the chosen death-song of a multitude of the redeemed,—and in "Depth of Mercy, can there be, Mercy still reserved for *me*," is felt all its flowing, flute-like sweetness; all its aptitude for pleading plaint, for absolute abjection, and for passive trust. Of the former, Henry Ward Beecher said: "I would rather have written that hymn than have the fame of all the kings that ever sat on the earth. It has more power in it. That hymn will go on singing till the last trump calls forth the angel-band."

In Charles Wesley's Christmas, Easter, and Ascension Hymns: "Hark, the herald angels sing," "Christ the Lord is risen to-day," and "Hail, the day that saw Him rise," we hear the animating sweetness of the echoing horn. "Holy Lamb, who Thee confess," breathes the tranquil fervour of the completest consecration. The last-named is so illustrative of the close, neat plaiting of his hymnal texture, that I must quote it entire. Each successive clause embodies a clear idea in a bar of music. Each verse is perfect in itself. Each line fits in like the cubes of an exquisite mosaic pavement. There is not a loose thread, there is no rough edging. The balance of rhythm, and the antithesis or parallelism of idea, are equally exact. Lines and verses seem "knit together in love":—

> Holy Lamb! who Thee confess,
> Followers of Thy holiness,
> Thee they ever keep in view,
> Ever ask, "What shall we do?"
> Governed by Thy only will,
> All Thy words we would fulfil;
> Would in all Thy footsteps go,
> Walk as Jesus walked below.

While Thou didst on earth appear,
Servant to Thy servants here,
Mindful of Thy place above,
All Thy work was prayer and love;
Such our whole employment be,
Works of faith and charity;
Works of love on man bestowed,
Secret intercourse with God.

Early in the temple met,
Let us still our Saviour greet;
Nightly to the mount repair,
Join our praying Pattern there;
There, by wrestling faith obtain
Power to work for God again,
Power His image to retrieve,
Power like Thee, our Lord, to live.

Vessels, instruments of grace,
Pass we thus our happy days
'Twixt the mount and multitude,
Doing, or receiving, good:
Glad to pray and labour on
Till our earthly course is run
Till we, on the sacred tree,
Bow the head and die like Thee.

In the metre 6—7's, he comes up to his highest models: Shakespeare's "Take, O take, those lips away," and Ben Jonson's "Queen and Huntress, chaste and fair."

Take as a specimen one of Charles Wesley's hymns which has received due literary recognition as a Christian lyric; that with which George Eliot represents Seth Bede, the village Methodist, as singing down all his griefs, perplexities, and cares, as he strode across the lonely Derbyshire moors on a bright Sunday morning:—

Christ, Whose glory fills the skies,
  Christ, the true, the only Light:

Sun of righteousness, arise,
  Triumph o'er the shades of night;
Day-spring from on high, be near,
Day-star in my heart appear, etc.

It may be well to place side by side with this the other morning hymn which George Eliot describes another country Methodist, Dinah Morris, as singing beneath the same heart-bruising sorrow, as she lights the fire and dusts her little cottage-room. The words breathe a "peace which passeth all understanding," and "a joy unspeakable and full of glory"; in powerful contrast with the profound unrest, the melancholy misgiving, and the prevailing mental and moral *malaise* to which unbelief had doomed the great agnostic novelist and poet:—

Eternal Beam of light Divine,
  Fountain of unexhausted love,
In Whom the Father's glories shine,
  Through earth beneath and heaven above,

Jesu, the weary wanderer's rest,
  Give me Thy easy yoke to bear;
With steadfast patience arm my breast,
  With spotless love, and lowly fear.

Speak to my warring passions, "Peace!"
  Say to my trembling heart, "Be still!"
Thy power my strength and fortress is,
  For all things serve Thy sovereign will, etc.

A metre in which Charles Wesley excelled the most esteemed of secular songs was "8's." His paraphrase of Canticles I. 7: "Tell me, O Thou Whom my soul loveth, where Thou makest Thy flock to rest at noon," is almost as superior, for example, to Rowe's popular "Despairing, beside a clear stream," in melody of rhythm as in loftiness of sentiment:—

Thou Shepherd of Israel, and mine,
The joy and desire of my heart,
For closer communion I pine,
I long to reside where Thou art:
The pasture I languish to find
Where all who their Shepherd obey
Are fed on Thy bosom reclined,
And screened from the heat of the day.

'Tis there, with the lambs of Thy flock,
There only, I covet to rest,
To lie at the foot of the rock,
Or rise to be hid in Thy breast:
'Tis there I would always abide,
And never a moment depart,
Concealed in the cleft of Thy side,
Eternally held in Thy heart.

Charles Wesley was also a master of the favourite mediæval metre, 8's and 7's, with its blended pathos and exultation, of which the Austrian national anthem strikes the true key-note. His best-known hymn in this metre is "Love Divine! all love excelling."

Handel composed tunes to three of Charles Wesley's hymns: "Sinners obey the Gospel word," "Rejoice, the Lord is King," and "O Lord Divine, how sweet Thou art!" The last-named, and "Head of Thy Church triumphant," and "Ye servants of God, your Master proclaim," in three of his favourite metres, have found their way into a great number of Collections.

It may be asked, Do Charles Wesley's hymns realise the true conception of a Hymn?

A *hymn*, as St. Paul indicates, holds a place between a psalm and a song: "psalms, and hymns, and spiritual songs." It is, however, more closely related to the psalm than to the song; as is implied by the necessity of qualifying "songs" by the word "spiritual"; whereas the spiritual element is included in both psalms and hymns. The Greek *hymn*, like the Hebrew *psalm*, was essentially a religious composition, for the use of worshipping assemblies, and for solemn festivals. The purpose of these three orders of sacred melody is to give to devotion and edification—personal, social, and public—enlivenment, intensity, facility, and delightfulness; by the animating charm and potency of poetry and music.

Like every other lyric, a hymn should be a flawless gem. It should embody a complete sense: one full sentiment and significance; of which the last line is the coping-stone. It should be perfect as a work of art.

A hymn-writer must, first of all, be a born poet; and Charles Wesley's hymns bear the true stamp of poetic genius. There should be in hymns a freeness of movement, as if they were self-made. The easy grace of most of Charles Wesley's hymns is exquisite.

Charlotte Brontë incidentally alludes, in *Shirley*, to another marked quality of Charles Wesley's hymns: the strange blending of wailing pathos with exultation. She describes the effect of the overhearing, as she passed the door of a Yorkshire cottage where a Methodist meeting was being held, the impassioned singing of the hymn:—

> Oh! who can explain This struggle for life!
> This travail and pain, This trembling and strife!
> Plague, earthquake and famine, And tumult and war
> The wonderful coming Of Jesus declare.
>
> Yet God is above Men, devils and sin;
> My Jesus's love The battle shall win:
> So terribly glorious His coming shall be,
> His love, all-victorious, Shall conquer for me.

Charles Wesley's imagery is as clear-cut as that of Byron. I give two examples:—

O Thou that camest from above,
The pure, celestial fire to impart!
Kindle a flame of sacred love
On the mean altar of my heart.

There let it for Thy glory burn
With inextinguishable blaze,
And trembling to its source return,
In humble prayer, and fervent praise.

As flowers their opening leaves display,
And glad drink in the solar fire,
So may we catch Thy every ray,
So may Thy influence us inspire,
Thou beam of the Eternal Beam,
Thou purging Fire, Thou quickening Flame.

There is also in Charles Wesley's hymns a sparkling spontaneity, reminding one of Milton's paraphrase of "As well the singers as the players on instruments shall be there; all my fresh springs are in thee":—

Both they who sing, and they who dance,
With sacred songs are there;
In thee fresh brooks and soft streams glance,
And all my fountains clear.

Charles Wesley would have been universally recognised as one of the greatest of lyric poets that ever sang, but for the fact that he is not only a purely and intensely religious poet, but is by eminence *the* poet of religion, of religious revival, and of the loftiest and the deepest spiritual life. This, too, has greatly limited the area of adoption of Charles Wesley's hymns. There are indeed exceptions, such as, "O love Divine, how sweet thou art," and "O for a heart to praise my God," "Ye servants of God, your Master proclaim," and "Head of Thy Church triumphant," as already noted. This is owing greatly to their mellifluous rhythm, which outvies the charm of secular song.

No other poet has given such a clear and varied expression to all the moods, stages, and vicissitudes of religious experience, and "filled all the stops of" spiritual "life with tuneful breath." Isaac Taylor truly says: "There is no principal element of Christianity, as professed by Protestant churches; there is no moral or ethical sentiment peculiarly characteristic of the Gospel; no height or depth of feeling proper to the spiritual life, that does not find itself emphatically and pointedly and clearly conveyed in some stanzas of Charles Wesley's hymns."

Yet, intensely spiritual and revivalistic as are his hymns, they are none the less the pure outflow and the healthful incitement of a sober, practical, philanthropic spirit. "They sing hymns to Christ as to a God," reports Pliny to Trajan, of the early Christians. And Charles Wesley's hymns to the God-man are amongst his noblest. "Christ, and Him *crucified*, and crowned," was the favourite theme of his hymns as of his preaching. This intensity, however, has doubtless greatly limited the area of adoption or appropriation of the Wesleyan hymnology. It was, as it were, "a new song," as proclaiming the commencement of a new and joyous era in the progress of the Kingdom of God, and especially as expressing the jubilant elation of revival and recovery. Even as all the great religious restorations of God's ancient people: the bringing up of the ark to Mount Zion, the dedication, and the successive re-dedications of the temple, were inaugurated by grand festive musical demonstrations; so has it been in each reformation and revival of the Christian Church. Yet it was only "*as it were* a new song"; abundant reminiscences of the older melodies came mingling with its harmonies. It was but a bold and spirited variation on the ancient anthems of the Kingdom of God: Love's lays, like Love's Law, given forth with a strange and startling emphasis; both "new and old."

Yet Charles Wesley's hymns have been circulated by millions and sung by millions, and have been translated into almost every language. Robert Southey truly said: "No hymns have been so much treasured in the memory or so frequently quoted on a deathbed." Coleridge says of Luther: "He did as much for the Reformation by his hymns as by his translation of the Bible, for in Germany the hymns are known by heart by every peasant; they advise, they argue from the hymns; and every soul in the church praises God in words that are natural and yet sacred to his mind." In like manner, Charles Wesley did as much for the revival of the last century by his hymns as he and his brother did by their sermons. The voice of Methodist hymnody, of which Charles Wesley was precentor, was "as of a voice out of heaven, as the voice of many waters": a crashing cataract of praise, multitudinous, liquid, heaven-rending; "as the voice of a great thunder": waking up ten thousand echoes. It spread away into a soft and world-wide melody, "as of harpers harping upon their harps":—

> Loud, as from numbers without numbei ; sweet
> As from blest voices uttering joy.

His short hymns on select passages of Scripture are full of poetic power, expository value, and historical significance as reflecting contemporary religious life. Pure springs of tender wisdom gush up everywhere. The leading lesson of a passage is seized with the grasp of genius, and presented in the most concise and effective manner, and with exquisite felicity yet simplicity of expression. These rhythmic comments like his own actions, prove that Charles Wesley's churchmanship, however stiffly loyal, was neither blind nor servile. For the most part, these hymns give the essential extract of Scripture, and are equally serviceable to the devotional reader and the theological student. Those on the Epistles, however, are more distinguished by force and keenness than by gentleness and beauty. As a specimen of true and helpful exegesis, we quote that on "Fill up that which is behind of the sufferings of Christ":—

The sufferings which the body bears
  Are still the sufferings of the Head;
While every true disciple shares
  The cross on which his Saviour bled:
The members all His cup partake
And daily die for Jesu's sake, etc.

Charles Wesley's elegiac poetry is a rich manifestation of his mind and heart, and abounds with exquisite tracings of character and experience. Sometimes he reached a high strain of triumph; as in his elegy on Mrs. Horton, who at thirty-four died suddenly, uttering the one word "Victory." His satire was biting and blistering. It lacked Pope's subtlety, delicacy, brilliancy, playfulness, and polish, but it had much of Dryden's rugged might, without a grain of Dryden's coarseness. It was marked by Churchill's honest, homely energy of invective and denunciation, but had no spot of his vulgarity. It could boast little of Samuel Wesley's richly comic humour, but had much of his epigrammatic point. It was pungent with both Attic salt and the salt of grace. His satire beginning: "What is a modern man of fashion?—A busy man without employment," is in a piquant airy vein like that of Gay.

Charles Wesley was admitted to be one of the most eloquent, effective, and successful preachers of the age.

The commentator, Joseph Sutcliffe, described him as, at the beginning of his discourse, the most deliberate, slow-speaking, and pauseful, but towards and at the close, the most impetuous, impassioned, vehement, irresistible orator he ever heard. The few sermons of his which remain, notably those preached before the University of Oxford, from "He that winneth souls is wise" and "Awake thou that sleepest," etc., are distinguished chiefly by simplicity, fervour, and directness of appeal. His sermon on *The Ministry of Angels*, apparently preached before he went to Georgia, displays a fine philosophic spirit, and proves that, had he cared to cultivate the graces of pulpit oratory, he might have rivalled the most distinguished of his contemporaries—Blair or Seed or Atterbury. But he preferred to deal out short, sharp sentences, pulsing with a fervid yearning, and importunate evangelism.

In personal appearance Charles Wesley, like John, was decidedly below the middle height. But each was, every inch of him and every ounce of him, a *man*.

Wilberforce gives a most touching account of his introduction to Charles Wesley. "I went to see Hannah More, I think in 1782, and when I came into the room Charles Wesley rose from the table, around which a numerous company sat at tea, and coming towards me, gave me solemnly his blessing. I was scarcely ever more affected. Such was the effect of his manner and appearance that it altogether overset me, and I burst into tears, unable to restrain myself." Charles Wesley was then in his seventy-fourth year; Wilberforce was twenty-three, and dated his conversion three years later. What happy insight into a yet undeveloped character; what mysterious presage of a calling yet to come, was given to the aged poet! What a striking and significant picture! The devout, intellectual, imaginative, and practically-benevolent Hannah More presiding over the neat gentility of a literary and religious tea-party; and the venerable hymnist and evangelist, with impassioned look and lifted hands, pronouncing a solemn and prophetic benediction upon the youth who was to be, to two generations, the great champion, by voice and pen, of "Practical Christianity," philanthropy, and liberty.

Charles Wesley was himself a brave and ardent philanthropist. At grave personal risk, he denounced slavery in Charleston, Carolina; and he continued the laborious prison-visiting of his youth to the very end of life. But his chief claim to the gratitude of the Church and of the race lies in his many hundreds of "psalms and hymns and spiritual songs."

JOHN NEWTON.

JOHN NEWTON OF OLNEY

(1725–1807)

By
James Macaulay, M.A., M.D.

IN the very heart of the City of London, at the entrance of Lombard Street, close to the Mansion House, the Royal Exchange, and the Bank of England, stands the Church of St. Mary Woolnoth. Its greatest attraction, to many a Christian pilgrim, is a plain mural tablet to the memory of a former rector, who was buried in the vault beneath. The inscription was written by himself, leaving only the date of his death to be added.

The epitaph begins thus:—"John Newton, Clerk, once an infidel and libertine, a servant of slaves in Africa, was, by the rich mercy of our Lord and Saviour, Jesus Christ, preserved, restored, pardoned, and appointed to preach the faith he had long laboured to destroy." The record then tells that he ministered nearly sixteen years as curate and vicar of Olney, in Bucks, and twenty-eight years as rector of the united parishes of St. Mary Woolnoth and St. Mary Woolchurch Haw, in the City of London. He died in his eighty-third year, on 21st December 1807, and was buried on the last day of that year, a great concourse of ministers and people being present.

This "clerk" has left no great name in history as a man of learning or genius or eloquence, yet he will ever hold a high place in Christian biography. His writings, if not brilliant, had the better merit of being useful. He was an earnest preacher, a faithful pastor, and a wise counsellor and teacher. He was no common man who was the intimate friend of William Wilberforce and of Hannah More, of the Grants and the Thorntons, of Lord Dartmouth and Ambrose Serle, and the best of the laity, as well as the clergy of all denominations in that day. A more enduring fame is his, in having been for many years the companion and the comforter of the poet Cowper, and the joint author with him of the classical and still popular book of "Olney Hymns."

The course of his ministry, whether in the country or in London, was uneventful, so far as outward incidents of any remarkable kind are concerned. But the early career of this "Clerk in Holy Orders" was marked by a succession of adventures and a variety of experiences such as few have encountered. The genius of Defoe himself could not have invented a more wonderful story, and it gives another illustration of the common saying, that oftentimes "truth is stranger than fiction."

John Newton was born in London in July 1725. His father, a seafaring man, was for many years master of a ship in the Mediterranean and Spanish trade. He attained some position and substance, his career ending as Governor of York Fort in Hudson's Bay, where he died in 1750. He was a stern, severe father, in manner at least, which his son attributed to his having been educated at a Jesuit college in Spain. How he came there, or his origin and ancestry, biography does not record. That the severity was mainly in manner and outward ways appears from another remark of his son, where he says: "I am persuaded that my father loved me, though he seemed not willing that I should know it."

He had married a gentle and pious wife, and John was her only child, to whose early training she devoted all a good mother's proverbial diligence and prayer. We are told that when barely four years of age the boy could read with facility, and his mind was stored with many portions of Scripture. The mother's cares and prayers were laid up before God ; and the seed sown in that young heart, though long hidden and to all appearance lost, bore fruit after many days. No instance more striking, and no encouragement more cheering for Christian mothers, could be given than the life of John Newton. God alone saw the end from the beginning of that life, and the story of it is full of interest and instruction.

The father married again, and the second wife was not of the same spirit as the first. Under his stepmother the boy was kindly treated, but he had no further religious training, and being left to his own ways, and in different companionship, the early influence seemed to be lost.

When only eleven, after being about two years at school, Newton was taken by his father to the Mediterranean in his own ship, and before he was fifteen he had made several voyages. He was then placed in a merchant's office at Alicante, in Spain. His prospects were good, but his unsettled behaviour, and impatience of restraint, caused him to lose his situation. On his return home, his father, not intending to go to sea again, was anxious to settle his son, and consulted a Liverpool merchant, Mr. Manesty, who offered to send him out to Jamaica, and to take care of his future welfare. To the proposal that he should go to the West Indies the young man consented readily, but a circumstance occurred which was to influence his whole future history.

Some distant relatives of his mother invited him to pay them a short visit in Kent, before he went abroad. In the personal recollections of his life, he tells that he was very indifferent about going to pay this visit, but he went, and was most kindly received. In this family were two daughters, the eldest of them, Mary Catlett, then only fourteen years of age. It was a case of "love at first sight." He said himself long after, "I was impressed with an affection for her which never abated or lost its influence over me. None of the scenes of misery and wickedness I afterwards experienced ever banished her for an hour together from my waking thoughts for the seven following years."

To go to Jamaica, and to be absent for years, was now felt to be something intolerable. He determined he would not go, and yet he did not know how to tell his father of his change of purpose. He stayed with the Catletts for three weeks instead of three days, lingering until the ship had sailed. His father, although at first greatly displeased, became reconciled to him, and in a short time found for him a good berth on board a vessel trading to Venice.

Returning to England in December 1743, he repeated his visit to Kent. Here he protracted his stay in the same imprudent way as before, and again disappointed his father in the plans for his welfare. This disregard of duty almost provoked the father to disown his son and leave him to his own ways. But the difficulty was settled in a very summary way this time. The sailor-looking lad, being met by a press-gang, was taken by force aboard the *Harwich* man-of-war. As a French fleet was then hovering on the coast, and as his release could not be obtained, his father procured him a recommendation to the captain, and he was placed on the quarter-deck as a midshipman.

The *Harwich* lay in the Downs, and Newton obtained leave to go on shore for a day. Regardless of consequences, he foolishly determined, to pay another visit to the Catletts, before sailing to the West Indies. The captain was prevailed on to excuse his absence, but by this breach of discipline the lad lost his favour. At length the ship sailed from Spithead, but through stress of weather was compelled to put in at Plymouth. Several vessels of the fleet under convoy were lost in that gale. Newton's father had interest in some of them, and on that account he went to Torbay. Hearing of his being there, the son resolved to see him. His object was to try to get his release from the navy, preferring to go into the African trade, with which his father was connected.

The thought no sooner occurred to him than, with his habitual reckless impetuosity, he determined to carry it out. He was sent one day on shore with a boat's crew, with charge to look out that none of the men deserted. He was no sooner on land than he betrayed his trust and went off himself. When within two hours of his father he was discovered by a party of soldiers, brought back to his ship as a deserter, and after being kept in irons some time, was publicly flogged, and degraded from his rank as midshipman. His rage was so great that he conceived the purpose of taking the life of his captain; then, overwhelmed with shame and despair, he had the temptation to drown himself. From this crime the thought of Mary Catlett saved him. He could not bear that she should think meanly of him after he was dead. No fear of God was consciously present with him, yet His merciful providence and abounding grace preserved the graceless reprobate.

By a singular incident his desire to visit Africa, instead of the West Indies, was realised. The *Harwich* was in Funchal Bay, Madeira, and the fleet was to sail on the following day. That morning he was late in bed. One of the midshipmen coming down, told him to turn out. Not complying with instant haste, his hammock was cut down. Although very angry, he dared not resent this, and was soon on deck. Here he saw a man putting his clothes into a boat, saying he was going to leave the ship. On inquiry, Newton learned that two able seamen from a Guinea Coast ship had entered on board the *Harwich*, the commodore ordering the captain to send two of his crew in their room. The boat was detained a few minutes, when Newton appealed to the captain to give him his discharge, and to let him take the place of one of the men already in the boat. Strange to say, the captain consented, although he had refused to grant his discharge at Plymouth, even at the request of the admiral on the station. In less than half an hour after he had been asleep in his hammock he was on board the Guinea Coast trader. In a few months the captain of this slave-ship died of fever. The mate who succeeded to the command had no good feeling toward Newton, who, fearing he might be sent again on board a man-of-war, determined to stay on shore at the first opportunity.

Wandering alone, utterly destitute, Newton was glad to enter the service of a slave-dealer on one of the Plantain islands. Here he passed a time of terrible hardship and wretchedness. The slave-dealer was absent for a time, during which his black mistress treated the strange servant with the utmost cruelty, even when he was down with fever. When he began to recover he was nearly starved to death, and in his own "Narrative" of this part of his life he tells how his hunger compelled him to go out at night and prowl about for food; and at the risk of being flogged if discovered, he used to pull up roots in the plantation and eat them raw on the spot. Sometimes the poor slaves in their chains pitied him, and secretly gave him some of their scanty food.

On the return of the master his lot was still more wretched, owing to the falsehoods told about him by the black woman who had been his persecutor, and was now his reviler. His condition provided a modern illustration of the prodigal in deepest misery in a far country.

It was by a happy accident, as it is called, but by a providential event, as was afterwards gratefully acknowledged, that the rescue from Africa was at that time effected. A strange ship unexpectedly hove in sight. It turned out to be one belonging to Mr. Manesty of Liverpool, the same who had already taken interest in the son of his friend Newton of London, and who had offered to take him to Jamaica. The father did not know where his son was. He supposed he was in the West Indies, and had given instructions to the captain of Mr. Manesty's trading ship to bring the lad home if he met with him. Little was it expected that he should be found on the coast of Africa.

A new succession of perils and adventures occurred during the voyage of this vessel. In January 1748 they started to return to England, but not by the direct route now taken. There was a long navigation of thousands of miles, partly for purposes of trade, but also for getting the advantage of the trade winds. In two months we find the ship off Newfoundland. Here they amused themselves at the cod fisheries, but being delayed by the ship needing repairs, the stores were exhausted and they had to fish for their maintenance.

It was early in March when they left the Banks. The ship was leaky, and the passage across the Atlantic stormy. Near the end of the month they sighted the Irish coast, but were then driven by a gale to the Hebrides, narrowly escaping there from total wreck. Not till 8th April did they find safe anchorage in Lough Swilly, in Ulster.

Newton had some wonderful personal adventures and deliverances during the voyage. Once he was awakened by a violent sea breaking over the ship. Hastening on deck, the captain ordered him to fetch a knife. When he went below for it another man went up in his stead, and was immediately washed overboard.

While the ship was refitting, Newton went to Londonderry, where he met with much hospitable kindness, and where his health was recruited. He wrote to his father, who had despaired of ever seeing him again, supposing the ship to have been lost, no tidings having been received for so long a time. The letter arrived a few days before Newton's father left England, to take the appointment of Governor of York Fort, then under the Hudson's Bay Company. Before he sailed he paid a visit to Kent, and gave consent to his son's marriage with Mary Catlett. At the end of May 1748 Newton arrived at Liverpool, about the same time that his father was sailing from the Nore. From Mr. Manesty he received a warm welcome. His treatment of the young man, now and always, was most generous. After hearing all his story, the good merchant offered him the command of one of his ships; but Newton wisely declined, thinking it better to make another voyage first, "to learn to obey," as he said, "and to acquire a further insight into business before venturing to undertake such a charge."

In August he sailed from Liverpool in one of Mr. Manesty's African ships. On the voyage he had new adventures and some remarkable deliverances. Just before leaving the Guinea coast he was employed in bringing supplies of wood and water for the ship. He had made several trips, and the boat was starting for the last time, when the captain called to him to come on board, and sent another man in his place. This seemed strange, for he had always gone till now. The boat, old and unfit for use, sank that night, and the man who took his place was drowned. The captain was asked why he called Newton back, and his reply was that he had no reason except that it came suddenly into his mind to do so. After going to Antigua, and then to Charleston in South Carolina, the ship made the home voyage, arriving at Liverpool, 6th December 1749.

As soon as the ship's affairs were settled, Newton went to London, and thence to Kent. He was married to Miss Catlett at Chatham, 12th February 1750. It might be deemed a precipitate and imprudent step, for he had saved very little of his pay, and his only hope of being able to support his wife was Mr. Manesty's promise of the command of a ship to Africa in the ensuing season. The appointment came while he was yet enjoying his honeymoon in Kent, and before many months the separation from his young wife had to take place.

He sailed from Liverpool in August of that year, as commander of the *Duke of Argyll*, a fine and well-appointed ship, with a crew of thirty seamen. In Africa he met with many who had known him in his days of deepest adversity, and who were surprised at his altered circumstances, as well as conduct. Among other incidents, we are told that he sent a long-boat, with a smart crew, to fetch his old black tyrant, the slave-mistress at the Plantains, to pay a visit to the captain of their ship. Her amazement on finding it was John Newton was extreme, and the more when he showed her great kindness, and loaded her with presents. "I told the men that she had formerly done me much good, though she did not know it. She seemed to feel it like heaping coals on her head." And so, under a salute from the ship, she returned to her own place. From some of the rough and reckless captains and traders he had to stand taunts and raillery, when they found he would not join them in excess of riot and wickedness. Leaving the African coast, the ship went to Antigua with its cargo of slaves and produce. The whole voyage lasted fifteen months.

Another voyage was made from Liverpool in July 1752, to Sierra Leone, and thence with slaves, as before, to the West Indies. A third voyage, after remaining only six weeks in England, commenced in the middle of October 1754. This proved to be his last experience of seafaring life. He was preparing for a fourth voyage, in command of a fine ship, which Mr. Manesty had purchased expressly for him, when he was seized with a paralytic stroke. He speedily recovered; but the seizure had been so sudden and unaccountable, that it was not thought prudent to risk exposure in a tropical climate. He gave up the command only two days before the ship was to sail.

Newton's "friend in need," Mr. Manesty, procured for him an appointment as tide-waiter at Liverpool, and the month of January 1756 saw the happy couple settled in a comfortable home, and the husband busy with congenial work in the port of Liverpool.

It has seemed advisable to give, without interruption, the narrative of John Newton's seafaring career.

If the details of these early years occupy what seems an undue proportion in the story of a long life, it is partly because they are in themselves of unusual interest, but more especially because they affected the character and course of his religious life, of the rise and progress of which we have now to give a brief account.

To his mother's pious training in his childhood, and the apparent loss of that good influence, reference has been already made. Evil as his ways were in his youth and early manhood, his was not a case of passive and hopeless abandonment, or unchecked descent from bad to worse. While not concealing or excusing his avowed infidelity and shameless life, he himself tells how it was only for a short period that he lived wholly without God and in open sin. He tells how, during his first voyages, old impressions of religion would sometimes revive. He tells how, at one period, he continued to read his Bible, and, with many resolutions and much fasting, he strove to establish a righteousness of his own.

For two years together he thus strove. But his heart was not in the work, and when temptations came he was helpless to resist evil companions and evil ways. An infidel book, and the conversation of an infidel shipmate, brought him to avowed scepticism, and he threw off the restraints of the Divine Word. Even then, when apparently dead in trespasses and sins, his conscience was not seared, and his thoughts were troubled. To find relief he plunged into deeper excesses of evil, and at times seemed almost an abandoned profligate. Then there were seasons of reflection and of remorse. The remembrance of his sainted mother, and thoughts of the pure girl to whom he was attached, helped to strengthen his better feelings. The remarkable escapes and deliverances, in times of sickness and danger, compelled him to recognise the hand of God in providence; of the higher power of Divine grace he was yet unconscious.

But the beginning of a new life was near. During the last voyage before his marriage, when he had narrow escapes from shipwreck, the decisive change began to show itself. "About this time," he says, in reviewing the events of his early life, "I began to know that there is a God who hears and answers prayer. I was no longer an infidel. I heartily renounced my former profaneness. I had taken up with some right notions, and was touched with a sense of God's undeserved mercy. I was sorry for the past, and proposed an immediate reformation. I was quite freed from the habit of swearing, which seemed to have been deeply rooted in me as a second nature. Thus to all appearance I was a new man." But he goes on to say: "Though I cannot doubt that this change, so far as it prevailed, was wrought by the Spirit and power of God, yet I was still greatly deficient in many respects. My views of the evil of sin, the spirituality and extent of the law, and the true character of the Christian life, were still very defective."

The methods of Divine grace in the salvation of sinners are various. There are cases when the exact time and place of conversion can be described. But in other instances it is not possible to say when the quickening of the soul begins or what are the processes of the new birth. The experience of Newton is instructive on this point. There can be no doubt that the previous checks of conscience and convictions of sin were also to be ascribed to restraining grace, and were wrought by the spirit of God, who worketh when and how He wills. The Gospel, or glad tidings of salvation through faith in the Saviour, he did not at once receive as it is the privilege of many to do who "believe and live." At Charleston he had heard Gospel preachers, probably some of the early Methodists, but he says he did not understand, and he did not seek explanation. This, he says, threw him more on the study of the Bible, with meditation and prayer, and he found that truly unto the upright light ariseth out of darkness. Of his sincerity, and his decision to be on the Lord's side, there could be now no doubt.

This state of mind was more marked in the voyages after his marriage. During one of these he commenced a diary, which he continued till far advanced in life. This, after being long unknown, came into the hands of the late Rev. Josiah Bull, who has made ample use of its materials in his *Life of Newton.* He also commenced a regular correspondence with Mrs. Newton, and in his *Letters to a Wife*, which have been published, the progress of his religious life is to be seen. For a considerable time he had continued to make his way, with such help as he could obtain from books taken with him from England, among which were Dr. Doddridge's *Life of Colonel Gardiner* and Bishop Burnet's *Life of Sir Matthew Hale.* At length he met with one to whom, for the first time, he could open his whole mind, and who proved to him a counsellor and guide as welcome as was Evangelist to Christian in Bunyan's *Pilgrim's Progress.* Here is his own account of Captain Clunie, whose friendship was one of the memorable events in his history. "On my arrival at St. Kitts this voyage (1754) I found a captain of a ship from London whose conversation was greatly helpful to me—a man of experience in the things of God, and of a lively, communicative turn. We discovered each other by some casual expressions in mixed company, and soon became, so far as business would permit, inseparable. He not only improved my understanding but inflamed my heart. He encouraged me to open my mouth in social prayer. He taught me the advantage of Christian converse. He put me upon an attempt to make my profession more public, and to venture to speak for God."

It may seem strange that these two worthy sea-captains had no scruple and felt no inconsistency in being engaged in the slave trade. It was one of the "controversies" which had not come to the front in those times. Long after this, George Whitefield and other leaders of the religious revival bought or accepted gifts of slaves, for working in connection with the Orphan House, in Georgia.

In the latter part of 1755 Newton undertook his duties as tide-surveyor at Liverpool. At first he was "boarding-surveyor," having to board ships on their arrival in the Mersey, being out with his boat night and day according to the tides. Afterwards he had less arduous work, having merely to visit and clear ships in the docks. In this duty he had less work, and had more time upon his hands. He took active part in the affairs of a Baptist church, but without joining its membership, which could not be except upon "full terms," namely baptism by immersion, of which he did not see the necessity. At St. Thomas's Church he first heard Whitefield, who in the evening preached in St. Thomas's Square to an audience of about four thousand people. He had much conversation with the great evangelist, and some correspondence subsequently. In one of his letters he mentions that the population of Liverpool at that time was forty thousand people, "who in matters of religion hardly knew their right hand from their left."

Having to spend much time at the watch-office on duty, Newton busied himself there, as well as at home, in study, commencing the reading of the Scriptures in Hebrew and Greek, making use of *Poole's Annotations* and similar books in his biblical pursuits. He was always a diligent student, even on his voyages providing himself with books of an instructive and useful kind. About this time there occurred one of the providential deliverances of which there were so many in his early life. He had not long left the watch-house one morning when a gale of wind threw down the chimney-stack, and on his return he found the chair at which he usually sat broken to pieces.

After a year spent in this routine of duty and study, he seems first to have entertained thoughts of entering the ministry. This was a matter requiring consideration, and, in company with Mrs. Newton and a young friend, he undertook a journey into Yorkshire, where he had heard of remarkable revivals, both within and outside of the Established Church. Among other places visited was Haworth, where he received a truly Christian welcome from Mr. Grimshaw. "Had it been the will of God," he says, "methought I could have renounced the world to have lived in these mountains, with such a minister and such a people."

Newton returned to Liverpool greatly refreshed in spirit, and with his desire to enter the ministry confirmed. But he would do nothing rashly, nor "run" till he believed he was really called and "sent" to so responsible an office. He remained at his secular duties for nearly five years longer. The tone of his mind may be seen from some of his favourite books at this time: *The Imitation of Christ*, by Thomas à Kempis; *On Delighting in God*, by John Howe; Hooker's *Ecclesiastical Polity;* and the works of Philip and Matthew Henry. Of the *Life of Philip Henry* he says, "So far as it is lawful to make a mere man a pattern, I would as soon have chosen him for my model as any one."

Armed with a title to holy orders from Mr. Crook of Leeds, Newton proceeded to London, and saw the Bishop of Chester, who received him with great civility, but said that, as the title was out of his diocese, he could do nothing. However, he countersigned the testimonials from three clergymen, and then Newton waited on the Secretary of the Archbishop of York. By him he was told that the Archbishop had formed an inflexible resolution to keep to the rules and canons of the Church. He was thus disappointed in the object of his journey, but he had great satisfaction in visiting Romaine in London, Berridge at Everton, and Young (of the *Night Thoughts*) at Welwyn.

A second application to the Bishop of Chester, followed by a letter to the Archbishop of York, having brought him no nearer his object, Newton was disposed to enter the ministry in connection with the Congregationalists, rather than not exercise the gifts which were found increasingly useful in private assemblies. From a church at Warwick he received a call, after preaching there, and to Mr. Scott he offered his services wherever they might be best available. Meanwhile his friend at Leeds had interested the Earl of Dartmouth, who had recently offered the curacy of Olney to Dr. Haweis, famed afterwards as one of the founders of the London Missionary Society. Dr. Haweis declined, but recommended the appointment of Newton, who had been warmly commended by Venn of Huddersfield and other eminent men.

The Bishop of Lincoln then offered to ordain Newton, after examination. This the Bishop himself undertook, and expressed himself highly satisfied. In fact, Newton's fitness for the ministry, both in scholarship and in experience, was immeasurably greater than the average of candidates, although he had not the advantage of a university education. In less than a fortnight the Bishop admitted him to deacon's orders, at Buckden; and after preaching in various places, including St. George's, Liverpool, he preached for the first time at Olney, on Sunday, 27th May. He had some difficulty in obtaining the three testimonials for priest's orders, from the aversion then common to any encouragement of "Methodism," but this was in due time arranged, and the Bishop ordained him priest at Buckden, and parted from him with great courtesy and many good wishes.

Newton succeeded the Rev. Moses Browne at Olney—a somewhat eccentric man, but a faithful evangelical minister. The preaching of Mr. Browne had prepared the people of Olney for a Gospel ministry. The services in the parish church were well attended, and cottage meetings were speedily established in surrounding hamlets. Meetings were also held in a room in what was known as "the Great House," a mansion which was the property of the Earl of Dartmouth. At first the place was only used for addresses to the children of the congregation, but gradually attendance at an evening meeting, for prayer and exhortation, became a regular part of the vicar's duty. It was for the services at this prayer-meeting that Newton prepared most of the well-known "Olney Hymns," and in this work he was fortunate in having the poet William Cowper as his coadjutor. Cowper had then recently, along with Mrs. Unwin, come to reside at Olney, and greatly helped the minister in his pastoral work.

The living was a poor one, Mr. Newton's income being little more than sixty pounds a year, but a generous friend, John Thornton, allowed him two hundred a year, with a charge to draw upon him for whatever more he might require. This enabled Newton and Cowper to give help to many of the struggling poor during their visits to the homes of the people.

The intercourse with the poet Cowper is the most memorable feature of Newton's life at Olney. There are people even now who, through ignorance or malice, say that Newton's austere views of religion were the cause of Cowper's insanity. Every one who knows anything of the gentle poet's history is aware how utterly groundless is this statement. Cowper's malady was constitutional, and first manifested itself in his early days, when as yet he had never given to religion a serious thought. After his recovery he found in the Unwin family at Huntingdon true and congenial friends. When he went, along with the widowed Mrs. Unwin, to live at Olney, he there spent some of the happiest and most useful years of his life.

We are told that Newton reckoned this friendship among his "principal blessings." It was a blessing which his parishioners shared. Cowper eagerly offered himself as a "lay helper" to his friend. He acted as any curate, of the best type, would have done, visiting the poor and the afflicted, and assisting the minister in his prayer-meetings and week-day services. That he enjoyed a course of peace, short intervals excepted, from the time of his coming to Olney to the reappearance of his mental disorder, we know from the testimony of Mr. Newton, who "passed these six years in daily admiring and aiming to imitate him."

One memorable and lasting result of this friendship was the alliance in the composition of the well-known "Olney Hymns," to which we shall presently refer.

Another name associated with Newton and Olney is that of the Rev. Thomas Scott, then curate in a neighbouring parish. Scott's views on various points were cloudy and unsettled, and in his perplexity he sought the advice of Newton. This was gladly given to the earnest and sincere inquirer, who, by the force of truth, as he himself has recorded, was led to clear and hearty reception of evangelical religion. In his preaching and in his writings, the spiritual change was more and more apparent, and through his well-known *Commentary on the Bible* his influence for good has been felt down to our own day.

In the autumn of 1779, Newton's friend, John Thornton, offered him the living of St. Mary Woolnoth, vacant by the death of Dr. Plumtree. Believing that this larger sphere of usefulness was providentially opened, and satisfied that the interests of his people at Olney would not suffer by his removal, he entered on his new duties early in the following year. In the new church the audiences were different, but the preaching was the same. "I preach my own sentiments, plainly but peaceably, and directly oppose no one," he said in a letter to a friend, after being some time in London. "Accordingly, Churchmen and Dissenters, Calvinists and Arminians, Methodists and Moravians, now and then, I believe, Papists and Quakers, sit quietly to hear me." Many came from outside his parish to attend his ministry, for the evangelical preachers in those days were few and far between.

It was not only in the pulpit that Newton preached the Gospel. He held regular services at several houses in or about London, one of the places being at Mrs. Wilberforce's residence, where he also gave a series of lectures on the *Pilgrim's Progress*. The morning and evening daily exercises at his own home, first at

Charles Square, Hoxton, and afterwards in Coleman Street, were a notable feature in his ministerial work. Many attended, invited and uninvited. His house was also constantly open to visitors, who came to consult him about their spiritual concerns. At breakfast he was always ready to receive guests, and many an interesting meeting at this season is mentioned in biographies of these times. On several occasions the routine of his pulpit services was broken by series of discourses upon special subjects. One of these, which attracted much attention, was the series of sermons on the passages which formed the subject of Handel's greatest oratorio, the performances of which were given amidst much popular enthusiasm. There were fifty discourses in all, afterwards published under the title of *The Messiah.*

While bearing his testimony against what he deemed the irreverence of using such themes for purposes of public entertainment, Newton took occasion to preach with earnestness and clearness the doctrine of salvation through Christ. Other sermons on public occasions attracted unusual notice; but during most of the twenty-eight years of his London incumbency his labour was devoted to diligent and zealous discharge of ordinary ministerial and pastoral work. He took no public part in political affairs, and he was careful to avoid controversy either on doctrinal or ecclesiastical questions. Sometimes he was accused by Calvinists of being an Arminian, and sometimes by Arminians of being a Calvinist, "which," he says, "makes me think that I am on good scriptural ground." Courteous and tolerant towards all who differed upon minor points, he was held in honour and loved by all.

Of the good done by his published sermons and other works many gratifying testimonies were received.

An American correspondent informed him that thousands of readers had obtained comfort and instruction from them. From India also letters of grateful acknowledgment came, and many were the messages which the post conveyed, from all parts of England and Scotland, of the benefit received from his writings as well as his preaching.

He was also a most ready and voluminous letter-writer. He was applied to by innumerable correspondents, most of whom sought advice or instruction, and he devoted much of his time to the voluntary task of replying, often at considerable length, to their questions, or striving to solve their difficulties. Many of these letters have from time to time been printed, besides correspondence on more general topics. In the early volumes of *The Sunday at Home* will be found not a few of these long-treasured letters. During his life, or soon after his death, various volumes of letters were published, of which the best known are the *Letters to a Wife*, *Letters to Captain Clunie*, and a collection of letters on many important topics of Christian life and experience, under the title of *Cardiphonia*, or the heart's utterances on sacred subjects. It was Cowper who suggested this happy title for the two volumes of letters addressed originally to many correspondents and on a great variety of subjects.

In his hymns and sacred poems Newton has left a precious legacy to the Christian Church. He had not much poetical genius, in the ordinary sense of the phrase, and unfortunately he had a theory which tended to damp any little fire that he possessed. "There is a style and manner," he says, "suited to the composition of hymns, which may be more successfully, or at least more easily, attained by a versifier than a poet. They should be hymns, not odes, if designed for public worship, and for the use of plain people. Perspicuity, simplicity, and ease should be chiefly attended to; and the imagery and colouring of poetry, if admitted at all, should be indulged very sparingly, and with great judgment." Notwithstanding this restraint, there are some of Newton's hymns so universally popular that his name holds honourable position among the singers of the Christian Church. Few hymns are more welcome, and sung with more hearty feeling, than these, of which we need only give the opening lines:—

How sweet the name of Jesus sounds
In a believer's ear!
It soothes his sorrows, heals his wounds,
And drives away his fear.

For united praise in the sanctuary how joyous is this strain:—

Glorious things of thee are spoken,
Zion, city of our God;
He whose word cannot be broken
Formed thee for His own abode.
On the Rock of Ages founded,
What can shake thy sure repose?
With salvation's walls surrounded,
Thou mayst smile at all thy foes.

How cheering, too, are the words of encouragement to prayer:—

Behold the throne of grace!
The promise calls me near;
There Jesus shows a smiling face,
And waits to answer prayer.

And in similar tone:—

Come, my soul, thy suit prepare,
Jesus loves to answer prayer:
He Himself has bid thee pray,
Therefore will not say thee nay.

Some of the best of his hymns are those which express the feelings and experiences of the believer, as in that utterance of humility and dependence:—

Quiet, Lord, my froward heart:
  Make me teachable and mild,
Upright, simple, free from art;
  Make me as a weanèd child:
From distrust and envy free,
Pleased with all that pleases Thee.

Others describe the internal conflicts that sometimes exercise the faith and patience of God's people, as that beginning:—

'Tis a point I long to know,
  Oft it causes anxious doubt,
Do I love the Lord, or no?
  Am I His, or am I not?

Of the three hundred and forty-eight hymns which form the Olney collection, Cowper wrote only sixty-eight, almost all of them remarkable for poetic beauty or for experimental religion.

In the latter quality Newton's are equally rich, and the inferiority of the poetry in not a few of the hymns is compensated by the deep piety and tender spirit of the good pastor.

Very touching are the words in the preface to the book as it first appeared, when, in referring to the joint authorship, he says, "A desire of promoting the faith and comfort of sincere Christians, though the principal, was not the only motive to this undertaking. It was likewise intended as a monument, to perpetuate the remembrance of an intimate and endeared friendship."

By nature Newton had great warmth of heart as well as energy of mind, and these qualities, when sanctified and directed to the service of Christ, made him active and earnest in the Maker's work. But the most marked characteristics were due to his singular personal history. He had an abiding sense of self-abasement and deep humility, on account of his former wickedness of life, and his presumptuous rejection of the Gospel. Where sin abounded grace more abounded, was his constant feeling. God had freely forgiven, he knew; but he never could forgive himself, and with his humility was mingled perpetual admiration of the mercy and grace of God towards such a sinner as he had been.

Along with this deep humility there was conspicuous in him complete resignation to the will of God. This was especially seen in times of trial and affliction. "Wherefore doth a living man complain, a man for the punishment of his sins?" This was a favourite text with him in seasons of trial or sorrow.

Not less remarkable was his abiding sense of the presence and the providence of God in every event of his life. "When I go to St. Mary Woolnoth," he once said, "it seems the same whether I turn down Lothbury or go through the Old Jewry" (he lived then in Coleman Street), "but the going through one street and not another may produce an effect of lasting consequence. A man cut down my hammock in sport; but had he cut it down an hour later I had not been here. A man made a smoke on the seashore at the time a ship passed, which was thereby brought to, and brought me to England." It was this entire and constant reliance on Providence that made him calm in all events, both public and private, so that nothing seemed to surprise him or throw him into confusion, but his mind was kept in perfect peace.

Another notable feature in Newton's character was his sympathy and tenderness of heart. It was said of him that he literally wept with those that wept and rejoiced with those that rejoiced. The law of love was in his heart and the language of it on his lips. Whether in the pulpit or in his letters, or above all in personal intercourse, every one felt the quick sympathy and ready helpfulness of this man of God. He remembered his own wretchedness, when ready to sink into despair and none to help or comfort him ; and having found in the compassionate Saviour One who is touched with the feeling of human infirmity, he was possessed of a large portion of the same spirit of tenderness and pity.

It was in his pastoral visits, and still more in receiving the numerous strangers who came to consult him, that this tender sympathy was seen, and also the wise and kind counsel he gave to every applicant. He knew how to comfort the afflicted, to confirm the wavering, to cheer the feeble-minded, and was in every way a good physician of souls.

After the death of Mrs. Newton, in the winter of 1790, Newton experienced a succession of trials and afflictions, some of which were of a kind common to all who live to a great age. His sight was feeble and his strength decreased. For some years his favourite niece, Miss Catlett, devoted herself to his comfort, but the home was again made desolate when mental disease required her removal to an asylum. He felt also, with a grief such as might be expected from so warm a heart, the loss of most of his Christian friends of early days. Still, amidst his trials and his declining strength he took the liveliest interest in all passing affairs—the conflicts of political parties at home, the events of the great war of Napoleon's time, the movements on the Continent and in distant lands in those stirring times. Above all, his heart was cheered by the rise and progress of home and foreign missionary work, the establishment of the Religious Tract Society and of the Bible Society and other agencies for the extension of Christ's kingdom. He continued also without intermission to carry on his own ministerial work, even when friends would dissuade him from public exertion.

Cecil said to him, at the beginning of the year 1806, "Might it not be best to consider your work in preaching as done, and stop before you discover you can speak no longer?" "I cannot stop," was his reply, raising his voice. "What, shall the old African blasphemer stop while he can speak?" His last public sermon was announced, with a collection for the benefit of the sufferers from the battle of Trafalgar. His faculties were so far gone that he had to be reminded of the subject of his discourse. When he could no longer preach, he usually sat in the pulpit, that he might be able to hear the preacher.

The last time Newton attempted to speak in his church was in the reading-desk, just before the death of his curate, which happened on 5th December 1806. Throughout the next year he grew gradually feebler, and he died on 21st December 1807. Newton's body was laid to rest beside that of his wife in the church of St. Mary Woolnoth. In 1893 the church was cleared of human remains, and those of Newton and his wife were reinterred at Olney.

CHARLES SIMEON

(1759–1836)

By
Horace Noel, M.A.

Charles Simeon was born at Reading, 4th September 1759. He was the youngest of four brothers. Of the others, Richard, the eldest, died at a comparatively early age. The second, John, became a distinguished lawyer, and for many years represented the borough of Reading in Parliament. A baronetcy which was conferred upon him has descended to the present Sir John Simeon. The third brother, Edward, was an eminent merchant and a Director of the Bank of England. Charles was sent at an early age to Eton, where he obtained a scholarship, and, according to custom, was promoted in due time to a Scholarship, and afterwards to a Fellowship, in King's College, Cambridge.

As to his Eton days, we are told that he was an active lad, delighting in feats of dexterity and strength, and a bold and skilful rider. Of his religious condition at that time he speaks himself in most self-condemning terms. Yet it appears that a solemn impression was made on his mind by a national fast which was ordered in 1776, when he was about seventeen years of age. His serious observance of the day was such as to bring upon him the mockery of his companions; and although the religious feelings then called forth died away, his outward life still retained so much regularity that a song ridiculing his strictness was in vogue among some of his schoolfellows.

It was not, however, until after he took up his residence at King's College in 1779 that a thorough work of the Spirit of God was wrought in Charles Simeon's heart.

The means employed for this purpose was a message which he received, shortly after his arrival, from the Provost of the College, informing him that, according to rule, he would be expected to attend the Lord's Supper about three weeks later. The young man was alarmed when he thought upon his unfitness to partake in that holy ordinance, and set himself to prepare for it as best he could, taking for his guide a book held in great repute at that time, *The Whole Duty of Man.* "I began," he says, "to read it with great diligence, at the same time calling my ways to remembrance, and crying to God for mercy; and so earnest was I in these exercises that within the three weeks I made myself quite ill with reading, fasting, and prayer." Nor did his anxiety abate when the dreaded day was past; for he knew that on Easter Sunday he would again be required to communicate. He showed his sincerity by making restitution to any persons whom he thought that he had wronged; but the burden of guilt and anxiety weighed so heavily upon him that he sometimes envied the dogs their mortality.

The extremity of his distress prepared him to appreciate God's deliverance when it came. "In proportion," he continues, "as I proceeded in this work, I felt somewhat of hope springing up in my mind, but it was an indistinct kind of hope, founded on God's mercy to real penitents. But in Passion week, as I was reading Bishop Wilson on the Lord's Supper, I met with an expression to this effect, that the Jews knew what they did when they transferred their sins to the head of their offering. The thought rushed into my mind, What! may I transfer all my guilt to another? Has God provided an offering for me, that I may lay my sins upon His head? Then, God willing, I will not bear them on my own soul one moment longer. Accordingly, I sought to lay my sins upon the sacred head of Jesus, and on Easter Day, 4th April, I awoke early with those words on my heart and lips, 'Jesus Christ is risen to-day, Hallelujah.' From that hour peace flowed in abundance into my soul, and at the Lord's Table in our chapel I had the sweetest access to God through my blessed Saviour."

The Hallelujah of that Easter morning was the beginning of a life of praise commenced on earth and to be prolonged eternally in heaven. And the truths which were fixed in his mind by that memorable time of distress and deliverance became the basis of his preaching and teaching during a ministry of more than fifty-four years.

As will ever be the case with those who truly receive Jesus as their Saviour, Charles Simeon henceforward showed forth his Redeemer's praise not only with his lips but in his life. It is true that he did not at first perceive the inconsistency of his new position as a child of God with the pursuit of worldly pleasures. "When the races came," he writes, "I went to them as I had been used to do, and attended at the race-balls as usual, though without the pleasure which I had formerly experienced. I felt them to be empty vanities, but I did not see them to be sinful. I did not then understand those words, 'Be not conformed to this world.'" By a downfall into which he was thus led, he was taught once for all that, if he prayed sincerely, "Lead us not into temptation," he must not go into the way of it.

With this exception, the general tenor of his life, from the time of his enlightenment, appears to have been altogether worthy of the Gospel of Christ. He began to have prayer with his college servants (a marvellous thing at that time in a young collegian), and he practised the strictest economy in order that he might devote as much as possible of his income to the service of God. This was never less than one-third.

Having himself found a Saviour in Christ, he could not refrain from seeking, like Andrew, to lead his own kindred to the same happiness. He met at first with very limited success. His aged father was greatly displeased with the change in his son's views, and though he was in course of time reconciled to him personally, he retained his prejudice against his religious principles to the last. His brothers John and Edward also repelled his first endeavours to gain them with scornful ridicule. But his eldest brother, Richard, showed more sympathy, and went so far as to join him in establishing family worship in his father's house, which was then under Richard's management. And when he died in October 1782, Charles had much hope in his death. And respecting the other two he was able in after years to write: "Blessed be God, both these brothers lived to embrace and honour that Saviour whom I had commended to them."

Some idea of the godless condition of Cambridge in those days may be formed from the fact that about three years passed after Charles Simeon's conversion before he succeeded in making acquaintance with any one like-minded with himself. At length he was invited to tea by Mr. Atkinson, the incumbent of St. Edward's parish, whose ministry he had for some time attended; and became acquainted with Mr. Jowett, of Magdalen College, and Mr. John Venn, of Sydney. And the latter introduced him to his father, the Rev. Henry Venn, Rector of Yelling, near Huntingdon.

The friendship of Henry Venn was no ordinary acquisition. A man better fitted to act the part of a nursing father to a young follower of Christ could scarcely perhaps have been found. The warmest attachment was soon formed between these kindred spirits. Mr. Simeon writes in after years, "In this aged minister I found a father, an instructor, and a most bright example, and I shall have reason to adore my God to all eternity for the benefit of his acquaintance."

On Trinity Sunday, 26th May 1782, Simeon was ordained by the Bishop of Ely; and the following Sunday he preached his first sermon in St. Edward's Church, having been requested by his friend, Mr. Atkinson, to take charge of the parish during the long vacation. He fulfilled this office with zeal and diligence, visiting the whole parish from house to house, and calling upon Churchmen and Nonconformists alike. It was soon evident that the hand of the Lord was with him in his work. "In the space of a month or six weeks, the church became crowded, the Lord's Table was attended by three times the usual number of communicants, and a considerable stir was made among the dry bones."

Upon the death of his brother Richard, in October of the same year, it was thought desirable that Charles should take his place as the manager of his father's household, and he was consequently on the point of taking what seemed likely to be a final leave of Cambridge, when it suddenly appeared that God had other purposes respecting him. Little as he thought it, King's College was to be his home for life, and its stately chapel his burial-place.

This unexpected turn in the course of events was brought about by the death of the Vicar of Trinity parish. Mr. Simeon had often, as he tells us, longed that God would give him Trinity Church, that there he might proclaim the Gospel and be His messenger to the University. The patronage of the living was then in the gift of the Bishop of Ely, and Mr. Simeon's father was acquainted with the Bishop. At his son's desire, therefore, he wrote, requesting for him the appointment to this charge.

The parishioners, however, were anxious to retain the services of a Mr. Hammond, who had been curate to their late vicar. A lectureship connected with the church was in their gift, and independent of the living. They therefore elected Mr. Hammond to this office, and wrote to the Bishop informing him of the election, and requesting him to bestow the living also upon the new lecturer. In this they were confident of success, for they supposed that no man would accept so poor a living if the lectureship were separated from it.

Hearing of this, Mr. Simeon determined not to stand in the way of their wishes. But the Bishop, offended at the mode of proceeding which the parishioners had adopted, wrote to Mr. Simeon, saying that the living was his if he chose to accept it ; but that in any case he should not offer it to Mr. Hammond. Thus was this long-desired object placed within Mr. Simeon's reach. He preached his first sermon in Trinity Church, 10th November 1782, and he held the living until his death, 13th November 1836.

The disappointed parishioners, though destitute of any ground of complaint against Mr. Simeon, displayed their ill-will not only by absenting themselves from his ministry, but also by locking up their pews. The latter act was illegal, but for the sake of peace Mr. Simeon forbore to stand upon his rights, and had forms placed in vacant places for those who came from elsewhere to hear the Gospel. "To visit the parishioners in their own homes," he writes, "was impracticable, for they were so embittered against me that there was scarcely one who would admit me to his house. In this state of things I saw no remedy but faith and patience. The passage of Scripture which subdued and controlled my mind was, 'The servant of the Lord must not strive.' It was painful to see the church, with the exception of the aisles, almost forsaken, but I thought if God would only give a double blessing to the congregation that did attend, there would be on the whole as much good done."

John Simeon was married in the summer of 1783, and his brother was asked to perform the wedding ceremony. His relations hoped, as he tells us, that the accompanying festivities would draw him back into the world. But God provided for his servant's safety in a remarkable manner. Having arrived in London, he was requested to conduct a burial service on behalf of a friend, the Rector of Horsleydown. While waiting in the churchyard for the coming of the funeral, he employed himself in reading the epitaphs, and came upon the following well-known lines :—

When from the dust of death I rise
To take my mansion in the skies,
E'en then shall this be all my plea,
Jesus hath lived and died for me.

Seeing a young woman not far off, he called her and bade her read this verse, remarking that her eternal happiness depended on her being able to say the same. She said in reply that she was in great distress ; and in answer to his inquiries, informed him that she had an aged mother and two small children dependent on her earnings and that her ruined health would no longer allow her to support them. He directed her to some suitable passages of Scripture, took her address, and the next evening called upon her.

On entering the room he found things as she had described them. "Though I was no stranger," he says, "to scenes of distress, at this sight I was overcome in a very unusual manner. I desired that they would join me in applying to the Father of mercies and God of all consolation. We fell upon our knees and in a moment were bathed in tears ; to almost every petition that I uttered, Amen, Amen, was the language both of their hearts and lips. I was too much affected to be able to converse with them. I therefore referred them to two or three passages of Scripture and left them." The next evening he called again, and his visit was much like the preceding. The third evening the young woman told him that, when he first spoke to her, she was on the point of going to drown herself. "And now, sir," she said, "instead of despairing of bread to eat, I am enabled to see that God is my friend, that Christ has washed me from all my sins in His own blood, and that it is my privilege to be careful for nothing. I have hitherto laboured on the Lord's Day for the support of my family, henceforward, by grace, I will never work again on the Sabbath, but devote it entirely to the service of God, the concerns of my soul, and the instruction of my children."

It is scarcely needful to say that Mr. Simeon gave them material help as well as spiritual comfort, and this help he continued for years. About a year after, hearing that the young woman was going on well, he called upon her, and on seeing him, she was at first unable to speak for excess of joy. When she became composed, she told him that her mother had died about three months before, saying, " Come, Lord Jesus, I am ready if Thou art willing." She herself, by patient continuance in well-doing, gave satisfactory proof that she had " passed from death into life," by the regenerating grace of the Holy Spirit. Referring to these facts long after, Simeon declared that this one case would have been to him an abundant recompense for a life's labour.

The persecution which Simeon endured at Cambridge was not limited to his own parishioners. Young gownsmen came to his church, not to worship God, but to display their wickedness by profane behaviour. And older members of the University showed in other ways their dislike of his principles. The extent to which this prevailed may be judged of by the fact that, when upon one occasion a Fellow of his own college ventured to walk up and down with him for a little while on the grass plot adjoining Clare Hall, it was to him quite a surprise, so accustomed was he to be treated as an outcast. But the grace of Christ was sufficient not only to uphold but to cheer him.

Referring to this period of his life, Simeon told the following anecdote :—" Many years ago, when I was the object of much contempt and derision in this University, I strolled forth one day, buffeted and afflicted, with my little Testament in my hand. I prayed earnestly to my God that He would comfort me with some cordial from His word, and that, on opening the book, I might find some text which should sustain me. The first text which caught my eye was this: 'They found a man of Cyrene, Simon by name: him they compelled to bear His cross.' (You know Simon is the same name as Simeon.) What a world of instruction was here! To have the cross laid upon me that I might bear it after Jesus: what a privilege! It was enough. Now I could leap and sing with joy as one whom Jesus was honouring with a participation in His sufferings."

By degrees, however, the storm abated. Towards the close of 1786 he preached for the first time before the University in the pulpit of St. Mary's. The church was crowded, and there seemed at first a disposition to annoy the preacher in a manner too common at that time. But scarcely had he proceeded more than a few sentences, when the lucid arrangement of his exordium and his serious and commanding manner impressed the whole assembly with feelings of deep solemnity, and he was heard to the end with most respectful attention. Of two young men who had come among the scoffers, one was heard to say to the other, "Well, Simeon is no fool, however." "Fool!" replied his companion; "did you ever hear such a sermon before?"

A friend who shared his rooms for three months at this period gives a description of his private life which goes far to account for his power in the pulpit. He says: "Never did I see such consistency and reality of devotion, such warmth of piety, such zeal and love! Never did I see one who abounded so much in prayer." He adds that, at this time, though it was winter, Simeon used to rise at four o'clock, light his own fire, and then spend four hours in private prayer and in the devotional study of the Scriptures. He would then ring his bell, and, calling in his friend, with his servant, engaged with them in what he termed his family prayer."

The faults to which he seems to have been naturally the most prone were pride and irritability of temper; but his biography gives ample evidence of the energy with which he contended against these indwelling enemies, and of the victory which, by the grace of God, he gained over them. As regards the attitude of his soul towards God, he writes in his later days: "There are but two objects that I have ever desired for these forty years to behold—the one is my own vileness, and the other is the glory of God in the face of Jesus Christ; and I have always thought that they should be viewed together. By this I seek to be not only humbled and thankful, but humbled in thankfulness, before my God and Saviour continually. This is the religion that pervades the whole Liturgy, and particularly the Communion Service; and this makes the Liturgy inexpressibly sweet to me."

Nor was he less diligent in cultivating a patient and humble spirit towards his fellow-creatures. We have seen how that text, "The servant of the Lord must not strive," restrained him from calling the law to his aid against the illegal conduct of his parishioners. "Many hundreds of times," he says, "has that one word tied my hands." In his pocket-book for the year 1787 he wrote in two different places, in large letters, the following rules, "*Talk not about myself. Speak evil of no man.*" Many years after he writes to a friend, "Such conduct is observed towards me at this very hour by one of the fellows of the College as, if practised by *me*, would set not the College only, but the whole town and University in a flame. But the peace and joy which I experience from lying as clay in the potter's hands are more than I can express. The example of our blessed Lord, who, as a lamb before its shearers, was dumb, and without either threatening or complaint committed Himself to Him that judgeth righteously, appears to me most lovely."

A famine, which occurred at the close of 1788, gave Simeon an opportunity of "adorning the doctrine of God his Saviour" by his public conduct. A subscription was raised, to which he liberally contributed, for the purpose of supplying the poor of Cambridge with bread at half-price. But when he inquired what was to become of the poor in the neighbouring villages, the reply was, "That is more than we can answer for." "Then," said Simeon, "that shall be my business"; and he immediately set on foot a scheme for the relief of twenty-four surrounding villages. In this work he aided largely, both with his money and his labour, riding out every Monday to visit one or more of these villages to see that the work was duly carried out. "This," says a friend, "made a great impression on the University, and was one of the first things to open their eyes to the character of the man who had been so much ridiculed and opposed."

Trinity parish came also by degrees to a better mind. The parish church being in possession of the lecturer on Sunday afternoons, and the churchwardens having refused (though without legal authority) to open the church for a Sunday evening service, Mr. Simeon had been constrained to hire a large room, where he held a meeting on Sunday evenings for the sake of those who valued his ministry. At length, in 1790, the churchwardens gave way, and an evening service was commenced in the church.

In 1794, the lectureship being for a third time vacant, Simeon was elected to it without opposition, and three Sunday services were held in Trinity Church from that time to the year 1808, when, owing to Simeon's enfeebled health, the afternoon service was given up, and the lecture was transferred to the evening service. Some of his enemies in the parish remained irreconcilable, but an attempt which they made in 1811 to revive persecution, after a long period of peace, brought to light the fact that the great majority of the parishioners were on Simeon's side. The commencement of the evening service in 1790 led, however, to an aggravation of misconduct on the part of godless undergraduates; and Simeon, though willing to bear injuries without resistance when his personal interests only were concerned, felt it his duty to act firmly when the honour of God and the welfare of the congregation were involved. "I always," he writes, "went down from my pulpit the moment the sermon was finished, and stood at the great north door, ready to apprehend any gownsman who should insult those who had been at church. I requested those who withstood my authority not to compel me to demand their names; because, if once constrained to do that, I must proceed to further measures. This kindness usually prevailed. Where it did not, I required the person to call on me the next morning, nor did one single instance occur of a person daring to refuse my mandate."

It must not, however, be supposed that all, or even the larger part, of the young University men who attended Mr. Simeon's ministry came in this bad spirit. Numbers of them came hungering and thirsting after righteousness, and did not go empty away.

From about the year 1790 Charles Simeon's career might be likened to the course of a river which, after making its way through narrow gorges and obstructing rocks, reaches a wider valley and waters fertile meadows on either side. In 1796 he made the acquaintance of Dr. Buchanan, a Scottish minister, whom, as he says, he "thought it one of the greatest blessings of his life ever to have known," and went with him to Scotland, where he officiated more than once in Presbyterian churches.

Simeon was one of the founders of the Church Missionary Society, and, independently of that, was instrumental in doing much for India. Missions to India were in those days rendered peculiarly difficult by the opposition, not of Hindu idolaters, but of the East India Company, and of others in Parliament and elsewhere who sided with them. It was feared that any systematic attempt to convert the natives of India would endanger the stability of the Company's rule, and it was thought better that India should remain a heathen land than that the gains of Englishmen should be imperilled. There were, however, chaplaincies for the benefit of the English in India, salaried by the Company, and it was practicable for the chaplains, if so disposed, to employ their leisure time in missionary labours among the heathen.

It was in this way that two young men, Thomas Thomason and Henry Martyn, whose hearts were moved with compassion for the benighted Hindus, were enabled to go out thither, primarily as the Company's chaplains, but with the further object of doing what they could for the heathen. The memory of both these men of God is inseparably connected with that of Simeon. Both of them had profited greatly by his ministry. Both of them were attached to him by the closest bonds of Christian affection. Both of them served with him in the Gospel as sons with their father. And both of them went forth to India attended by his warmest sympathy and prayers.

A Bible Society meeting is in these days so quiet a proceeding that one can scarcely read without a smile Mr. Simeon's narrative of the mighty struggle which accompanied the first public appearance of that Society at Cambridge in 1811.

The undertaking originated with some of the younger members of the University, and was no sooner generally talked of than the opposition arose. "A great alarm was excited, and every person without exception threw cold water upon it, from this principle, that if they were allowed to proceed in this way about the Bible, they would soon do the same about politics." Under these circumstances Mr. Simeon persuaded the young men to commit the matter to himself and one or two other friends of the Society among the seniors. He was joined by Dr. Jowett of Magdalen, Mr. John Brown, Fellow of Trinity, and Professor Farish, and the last-named obtained from the Vice-Chancellor a somewhat reluctant consent that a meeting of the University, Town, and County should be called.

The opposition, however, did not cease. Dr. Marsh (Margaret Professor of Divinity, afterwards Bishop of Peterborough) wrote a hostile pamphlet, and "with incredible industry put it in the hands of all the great men of the county and all the leading members of the University. Application was made to Lord Hardwicke, who agreed to take the chair; but this very circumstance augmented our difficulties. No head of a college would come forward. Dr. Milner[1] was in town, and would not come forward unless the bishop[2] did. The bishop would not, because it was in the Bishop of Ely's diocese, and he did not like to interfere with him. We all trembled lest Lord H., when he came to take the chair, should complain that he had been deceived by us. On Tuesday we heard, however, with joy that Lord F. Osborne would come and support Lord Hardwicke. Mr. Wilberforce had done all he could to get the Chancellor (the Duke of Gloucester) to give us his name and aid us with his presence, but in vain. At last, however, we had joyful tidings. The Duke was willing to be president. And then the day arrived. But how? Truly God showed that He reigns in the earth. The Earl of Bristol gave us his name. Dr. Milner had come down during the night. The Dukes of Bedford and of Rutland gave us their names. The Bishop of Bristol permitted us to use his also. And, to crown the whole, Mr. Nicholas Vansittart[1] sent down a printed letter to Dr. Marsh in answer to his. Dear Mr. Steinkopff was applauded for a great length of time, and all he said was most affecting. Mr. Owen was brilliant beyond measure. Professor Farish, with all his placidity, was animated and bold as a lion. Dr. Clarke, the Professor of Mineralogy, was extremely eloquent. He was aware that, by taking an active part, he was likely to cut himself off from all hopes of the Mastership of Jesus College, but avowed his determination to do what he thought most acceptable to God. Dr. Milner spoke nobly and manfully, and took shame to himself for having been so long in making up his mind. Lord Francis also spoke well, though short."

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[1] President of Queen's College.

[2] Dr. Mansel, Bishop of Bristol and Master of Trinity College.

Another work of great consequence, to which Simeon devoted both labour and money, a work which remains as a monument of his zeal, was that of the trust which he founded for the administration of the patronage of livings purchased with money given him by his friends, and partly also taken from his own resources. The object was to secure the presentation of godly and evangelical persons to the charge of souls.

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[1] Afterwards Lord Bexley.

In the charge which he left to his trustees, Simeon most solemnly warns and beseeches them, for the Lord's sake, in every appointment to be guided by one consideration only, namely, that of the welfare of the people whose spiritual interests have been confided to them; to be influenced by no desire to provide for a needy clergyman, nor by any solicitation of the great and powerful, nor even by petitions of the parishioners, but to appoint only "one who is a truly pious and devoted man, a man of God in deed and in truth, who with his piety combines a solid judgment and an independent mind."

But of all the work which was given Charles Simeon to do by his Heavenly Master, the greatest, if we consider its ultimate results, was (it can hardly be doubted) his ministry to the young gownsmen of Cambridge. Within three months from the beginning of his ministry in Trinity Church, his friend Henry Venn writes: "Mr. Simeon's ministry is likely to be blessed. We may indeed say, 'A great door is opened'; for several gownsmen hear him." And as years went on the number of these hearers greatly increased. In 1818 he says: "As for the gownsmen, never was anything like what they are at this day. I am forced to let them go up into the galleries, which I never suffered before; and notwithstanding that, multitudes of them are forced to stand in the aisles, for want of a place to sit down. What thanks can I render to the Lord for a sight of these things!" And in his later days it was not the younger members only of the University who felt the influence of his preaching. Referring to a sermon which he delivered in St. Mary's Church, 13th November 1831, Bishop Wilson of Calcutta says:

"The writer can never forget the impression made on his mind by the appearance of the church when Mr. Simeon delivered one of his sermons on the Holy Spirit before that learned University. The vast edifice was literally crowded in every part. The Heads of the Houses, the Doctors, the Masters of Arts, the Bachelors, the Undergraduates, the congregation from the town, seemed to vie with each other in eagerness to hear the aged and venerable man."

He wisely perceived the importance of having some private intercourse with the young men who valued his public ministry. On this subject, Mr. Thomason writes about the year 1793: "Mr. Simeon watches over us as a shepherd over his sheep. He takes delight in instructing us, and has us continually at his rooms." And again: "Mr. Simeon has invited me to his Sunday evening lectures.[1] This I consider one of the greatest advantages I ever received."

A narrative by the eminent Joseph John Gurney of Earlham, of a visit paid to Cambridge in 1831, gives the following lively picture of Simeon in his old age:—

"We sent a note to our dear friend, Charles Simeon, to propose spending part of the evening with him. While we were absent from the inn, there arrived a small characteristic note written in pencil: 'Yes, yes, yes. Come immediately and dine with me.' Simeon has the warm and eager manners of a foreigner, with an English heart beneath them. We declined his invitation to dinner; but as we were walking near King's College, we heard a loud halloo behind us, and presently saw our aged friend, forgetful of the gout, dancing over the lawn to meet us. He then became our guide, and led us through several of the colleges."

Mr. Gurney then gives some copious notes of the interesting conversation which passed between them during the walk, and afterwards, when they took tea at their friend's rooms; and adds:—

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[1] These must have been after the Sunday evening service in Trinity Church.

"The hour of the evening was advancing, and these beautiful remarks formed a happy conclusion to familiar conversation. His elderly servants were now called in, and I was requested to read the Scriptures. A very precious solemnity ensued, during which the language of prayer and praise arose—I humbly hope, with acceptance. I believe both my dear wife and myself were ready to acknowledge that we had seldom felt with any one more of the unity of the Spirit in the bond of peace."

The last sentence is the more notable from the fact that, while Mr. Simeon was a loyal member of the Church of England, Mr. Gurney belonged to the Society of Friends.

This biographer gives the following description of Simeon from personal recollection:—

"There was a remarkable combination of opposite qualities in Simeon's character. For dealing with cases requiring tenderness and sympathy, nothing could exceed his gentleness and deep feeling; whilst on occasions demanding firmness and vigorous speech and action he would employ very strong language in rebuking error or enforcing truth. Amidst all his thoughts about his various great works, he was very particular about little things. Indeed, in everything he was a pattern of neatness and punctuality. He was an uncommonly social man, delighting in the company of his friends; whilst he charmed them with his lively and original conversation, full of striking illustrations, accompanied often with much action, sometimes so amusing that it was almost impossible to refrain from a smile, even when he himself was speaking most seriously. But his striking action and devout appearance at all times in the pulpit can never be forgotten by those who knew him."

Charles Simeon preached his last sermon on Sunday, 18th September 1836, being then in good health and spirits, and died just seven weeks later, on 13th November, aged seventy-seven. Having never married, he retained his Fellowship and his rooms in college to the last.

Through the whole of his last illness his soul was kept in perfect peace. The following words, spoken ten days before his death, may serve to indicate his state of mind: "If you want to know what I am doing, go and look in the first chapter of Ephesians, from the third to the fourteenth verse. There you will see what I am enjoying now."

The following incident of his last days affords a striking display of his character. "When his servant, Mrs. C., came into the room on one occasion to arrange the fireplace, he said: 'When C. is going out, tell her to come to my bedside, and let me give her a last look.' When she came, he looked at her most affectionately and said, 'God Almighty bless you, my dear C.; now go.' Both his servants left the room overwhelmed at the sight of their dying master, from whom they had received so many kindnesses. He then turned his eyes towards me and said: 'Dear faithful servants! No one ever had more faithful and kind servants than I have had. And to have such dear creatures to attend me when I am such a poor wretch and deserve nothing but perdition!' The tears trickled down his face, and he appeared quite overwhelmed at a sense of God's mercies towards him."

Charles Simeon was buried in the Fellows' vault of his College Chapel. His funeral presented a remarkable contrast with the days when he stood almost alone, bearing the reproaches both of town and gown for his Master's sake. A procession occupying nearly all the four sides of the spacious quadrangle followed the coffin. "Heads of Colleges, and Professors, and men of all classes and ages from every College in the University, came to do him this last honour. The antechapel was occupied by a crowd of his parishioners, men, women, and children, clad in mourning, and many showing the reality of their sorrow by their sighs and tears. And not the least interesting sight was the assembly of young gownsmen, all in mourning, who stood between the coffin and the communion rails." Thus God fulfilled to His servant, even upon earth, the promise: "Them that honour me I will honour,"[1] a promise to be fulfilled more gloriously hereafter in the kingdom of heaven.

It may be not out of place to add a few words in conclusion respecting the distinctive features of Mr. Simeon's preaching and theology.

As a preacher his warmth of heart, vivacity of manner, and command of language would almost certainly have won for him popularity under any circumstances. But he was something better than a popular preacher, namely, a messenger of Christ, upon whose services the tokens of his Master's approval were bestowed in no ordinary degree. And the chief reason of this may readily be found. He abounded in faith, love, and devotion to his Redeemer's service, and was therefore such an instrument as God loves to use in bringing souls to Himself.

Faith and piety do not, however, *supersede* the use of natural means in doing the Lord's work, and it is not therefore superfluous to ask what natural means have been used by those who have laboured in the Gospel with eminent success. And in Simeon's case there can hardly be a doubt that his usefulness as a preacher was largely due to the wise and prayerful pains which he employed in the preparation of his sermons. Not only did he labour in this way for the profit of his own hearers, but he bestowed great pains in seeking to raise up other preachers of the same sort.

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[1] This was the text chosen by Dr. Dealtry for the funeral sermon which he preached in Trinity Church.

Lessons in the composition of sermons formed at one time an important part of the instruction given to his young friends who attended his private meetings. In this he made much use of Claude's *Essay on the Composition of Sermons*, a small volume written by a refugee Huguenot pastor. In 1796 he published a new edition of this work, with an appendix containing one hundred skeleton sermons prepared by himself. The same year, 13th November, he preached before the University a sermon on Mark xvi. 15, 16, which he afterwards published, with an appendix containing four different skeleton sermons on the same text. No less than five editions of this were called for before the year's end.

Encouraged by the success of these smaller undertakings, he began another work of a magnitude which few would attempt in these days, namely, a series of no less than two thousand five hundred skeleton sermons (the *Horae Homileticae*) contained in twenty-one volumes. How far its influence on the preaching of the evangelical clergy extended we have no means of knowing; but if we consider the spirit in which this great task was undertaken and carried out, we may be confident that it was "not in vain in the Lord."

Charles Simeon cannot be reckoned as a great theologian in the ordinary sense of the word. Like many men of the same stamp, he led too active a life to have time for extensive reading. But in one department of theology, that is to say, the writings of the prophets, apostles, and evangelists, he was well versed; and it would have been well for mankind if all theologians had resembled him in that respect.

As regards his theologian views, he may be taken as a nearly perfect type of the Evangelical Churchman. He was sincerely attached to his own Church, and speaks in the warmest terms of the delight which he took in her liturgy. Yet, as we have seen, he recognised and loved the image of Christ in whomsoever he met with it. Like his Divine Master, he could say, "Whosoever shall do the will of my Father which is in heaven, the same is my brother, and sister, and mother."

DANIEL WILSON

(1778–1858)

By
George Knox, M.A.

THERE is nothing very remarkable or stirring in the incidents of the early life of Daniel Wilson. He sprang from the middle classes of English society. His father was a silk manufacturer in Spitalfields, in which parish the future bishop was born. His mother was one of a family long intimate with the Rev. George Whitefield, her father being appointed one of the trustees of the great preacher. Until the age of fourteen the lad received ordinary teaching for about four years; he was then placed under the tuition of the Rev. John Eyre, minister of Ram's Chapel at Homerton, near which his father had a country house. He there acquired some elementary knowledge of Greek, Latin, and French, and with this slender provision of learning was, when still a lad, bound apprentice to a maternal uncle, Mr. William Wilson, like his father an extensive silk manufacturer and merchant. It is said that he had but to follow "the track marked out, and stores of wealth lay at his feet."

Daniel Wilson's education had been partial and incomplete. Even as a boy he seems to have been sensible of this. When the family of his uncle had retired to rest, two hours, taken from sleep, were devoted to keeping up Latin and French, and to English

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composition. Unconsciously to himself, the future bishop was qualifying himself under difficulties for his future career. Athletics were not then in vogue. When, according to the fashion of the times, apprentices lived in the family of their masters, there was little in well-ordered households to distract from business and study. Mr. William Wilson ordered his household in the fear of God, keeping holy the Lord's Day and conscientiously availing himself of the ordinances of the Church of England.

Daniel Wilson was thus brought up till the age of eighteen under genuine evangelical influences; but he had not yet been quickened by the Holy Spirit. His education had been religious; he had lived in regular attendance on religious ordinances. "He could hear whole sermons, but not a word belonged to him." It is on record that he was markedly irreverent during Divine service. His biographer says of him that his temper was impetuous and his passions strong, and his companions more or less like-minded. It was understood that he was sceptical in his views, and he admitted that he lived entirely without prayer.

While he was still a "curious and carnal person, lacking the Spirit of Christ," he was engaged in discussion with the other servants in his uncle's warehouse. He denied the responsibility of mankind, on the supposition of absolute election, and maintained the folly of all human exertions where grace was held to be irresistible. He said he had none of those feelings towards God which one of the party, a young man who was fond of conversing on the subject of religion, required and approved. The young man then said, "Well, then, pray for the feelings." That night Daniel Wilson prayed for the "feelings." In due season his prayers began to be answered; he became uneasy about his spiritual state.

There was a great struggle in him between the new man which was perceptibly forming in his soul, and the old man which had so long had dominion over him. The doctrine of election was at the time the great stumbling-block to him. By his mother's advice he went to old John Newton, then rector of St. Mary Woolnoth. Newton gave him the advice to "wait patiently on the Lord." He also reminded him that "unbelief is a great sin," and should be prayed against.

A year passed away, but there were still dark shadows in Daniel Wilson's soul. His intimate friend, Mr. Vardy, had offered his services to the London Missionary Society, and Daniel Wilson took much interest in hearing him preach. While he was himself still struggling in the deep waters, he suggested to his friend as a text for a sermon the word "Christ." "Begin with Christ, go on with Christ, and end with Christ, and I am sure your hearers will never be tired, for His name is like ointment poured forth." On 3rd October 1797 Daniel Wilson, for the first time, became a communicant, "drawing near with faith." He chronicles next day, "Yesterday and to-day have been, I think, the happiest days I ever remember." He had found "joy and peace in believing."

"I have never seen in any person," said Mr. Eyre to Daniel Wilson's mother, "such deep conviction of sin and such a view of the heart's corruption, where God has not some great and special work for that person to do. I should not wonder if God makes your son an eminent minister in His Church."

At first the way to the ministry did not seem at all open. His father's decided disapproval thwarted all his plans. Daniel Wilson then sought an interview with Rowland Hill at the Surrey Chapel. Mr. Hill thought him very young, and quoted the Epistle to Timothy. He told him that his time was not his own, that he had bound himself for a number of years, and that that obligation was superior to any. He added, "If you are pert and proud, and wanting to go without the Lord, I would not give a farthing for you or for your preaching either."

Daniel Wilson now learned to sit still. Some months after, his father spontaneously gave his consent to his change of career. He was then entered at St. Edmund's Hall, Oxford. In the meantime he was located with the Rev. Josiah Pratt in Doughty Street, where he had (in those days) a beautiful prospect from his room over the fields, unobstructed by any houses. At college he was a diligent student. His original stock of Latin and Greek would nowadays seem small, but it was probably more than the large majority then took to the University. Each day he added to it. By an examination statute passed in May 1800 he had, when taking his Bachelor's degree, to do all things required for the degree of Master of Arts. He took up all Latin authors; Thucydides and Herodotus in Greek; also the whole Hebrew Bible, in which the examiner confined his questions within a very narrow range. The result was that the senior examiner proclaimed he had done himself the highest honour. He gained the English prize essay for "Common Sense" in 1803. In the rostrum he was followed by Reginald Heber with his poem on Palestine. Walter Scott was present. Nine years after Heber and Wilson met in St. John's Chapel, Bedford Row. Both found their graves in India.

Daniel Wilson's first curacy was at Chobham, where Cecil was rector. There he visited everybody, in a time when parish visiting was not what it is now. He remained at Chobham a little over two years, and on leaving it was married to his cousin Mary, the daughter of Mr. William Wilson. In 1804 he was recalled to Oxford as Tutor and Vice-Principal of St. Edmund's Hall; he held at the same time the curacy of Worton, where he resided during the vacations. There the Word of the Lord had free course and was glorified. People flocked from all the villages round. On one occasion more than 160 communicants assembled round the Lord's Table. There was a great outpouring of the Spirit. Three young men converted from irreligion went out as missionaries to New Zealand. The good savour of Wilson's name still remains there.

Daniel Wilson was in the prime of his vigour, bodily and intellectual, when in 1811 he was called upon to succeed Cecil as minister of St. John's Chapel, Bedford Row. The congregation was a remarkable one, needing the exertion of all his powers. The Thorntons and the Grants, Zachary Macaulay, with his son, the future historian, William Wilberforce, Mr. Stephen and his family, with very many others of note in their day, and in the history of evangelical religion and philanthropic activity, were among the regular attendants. Abundant spiritual blessing accompanied the ministration of the same Word which had been so efficacious among the simple villagers around Worton.

The period of the ministry at St. John's was one of manifold extra activity in various directions. During it Daniel Wilson managed to get through a considerable amount of literary labour; but then he was as avaricious of time as John Wesley was, who was always "obliged to be off," and was disagreeable to Dr. Johnson, "who loved to fold his legs and have his talk out." But Wilson's fame must chiefly rest on his pulpit oratory, to which he consecrated his utmost powers. At length, under accumulated labours, his health broke down. Some rest was sought in foreign travel, but his entrance into the vicarage of Islington, to which he was appointed, "led," as his biographer says, "through the valley of the shadow of death."

In 1824 Islington was still almost in the country. Under its former vicar it had been asleep: it was now made to awake. Even in 1824 additional church accommodation was necessary, and Daniel Wilson had it much on his heart to supply the deficiency by three additional churches. In the parish church there was no evening service; he obtained the consent of the Vestry to establish one, he being responsible for the extra duty, and all sittings in the church to be free. It was crowded. Extensive parochial machinery, especially in the poorest parts of the parish, was set on foot.

But a great calamity now befell him personally. In 1827 his wife died, leaving him a solitary man after four-and-twenty years of peace, union, and comfort. Thus a tie was loosened which might have held him in England and prevented twenty-five years' service to the Church in India. Two years after, his aged mother, who had so actively promoted his early Christian career, passed away in peace. None of these things was permitted to arrest the full tide of work on which Daniel Wilson was then carried forward. The influence of this activity was not confined to Islington. It was clearly manifest, even to the most careless and prejudiced observers, that there was good in Evangelicalism, and that it was not inconsistent with the doctrine and discipline of the Church of England.

Daniel Wilson's own estimate of himself at this period is worth noting. "What I most lament is the remaining corruption of an evil heart, unbelief, pride, vanity, selfishness, self-will: the masked batteries of Satan. A few things I have always found important: to be cautious in adopting new notions, however plausible; to be fearful of persisting in a course of temptation, if entered upon; to be much in first principles as to the heart; to be quick in taking warning of conscience, or of a friend, or of the falls of others; and to keep close to the whole Bible in its simple and obvious meaning." His private journal is filled with words of deep abasement, confession of indwelling sin, devout aspirations and earnest supplications written as in the very presence of the heart-searching God.

At the period of his conversion in 1797, Daniel Wilson wrote to his friend Mr. Vardy, "I have felt great desires to go or do anything to spread the name of Jesus. I have even wished, if it were the Lord's will, to go as a missionary to heathen lands." This concern for the souls of the heathen was not a transient feeling. It still influenced him in the active part he took in furthering the interests of the Church Missionary Society. But the way for personal effort had not for many years been open. His course had been unmistakably marked out in different directions. But now he was a lone man. The silver cords of affection which had so long bound him to a loving wife in delicate health had been severed by death. The old feeling of restlessness and anxiety for foreign work sprang up again within him.

By the death of Bishop Turner, the see of Calcutta was once again vacant. Four bishops had filled the office in nine years. It did not seem a post to be coveted, nor was it found easy to fill it properly. It was offered to several eminent men in succession, but was declined by one after the other. The risk was considerable to men somewhat advanced in years of encountering an uncongenial climate, with the extensive journeyings it involved. India was not then, as now, a place easy of access. There was little to attract a person of the age which Daniel Wilson had attained, except a strong sense of duty. Having access to those with whom the appointment rested, he named others whom he deemed eligible for the post, and subsequently he wrote that if a real emergency arose and no one else could be found, he was ready to go.

After some delay the appointment was made. The archbishop "could not but admire the sacrifice he was making, and lament the loss Islington must sustain." The experiment was indeed an anxious one; but was wonderfully justified by the results. To judge it properly we have to carry ourselves backwards seventy years, and not to contemplate it from the standpoint of the present. It might have been viewed at the time almost as the leading of a forlorn hope.

The consecration of the Bishop need not be dwelt upon, nor the voyage round the Cape of Good Hope, which was prosperous and devoid of any remarkable incident; but it may be noticed in passing that when at Cape Town Daniel Wilson performed his first episcopal act, by confirming and ordaining there, he was in a certain sense entering upon his duties in a portion of the unwieldy diocese of Calcutta.

Seventy years ago India was a very different place for Englishmen from what it now is. There were of course no railroads; but there were moreover no roads. Unlike the Romans in their provinces, the English in India had not concerned themselves seriously about roads for their troops and treasure escorts throughout the land. From Calcutta to Cape Comorin there was literally no road, save an occasional patch for an evening drive at a civil station and around the precincts of Madras. Travellers ploughed their way through jungles, crossing rivers on rafts or in basket boats, as the Hindus had done from time immemorial. In the interior, except in a few localities here and there, it was much the same. Intercourse was difficult, tedious, and expensive. Few moved from their appointed localities, except great public functionaries on important occasions, or troops when compelled by the exigencies of military service.

Some years later the writer of this sketch, after a three months' voyage, found himself appointed to a station which by ordinary marching it would take him two months to reach. The distance could now be accomplished in two days. Our empire had nearly extended to its present limit, but there were still outlying provinces, like the Punjab, independent of our rule, and much had to be done to repair the devastations caused by Mahrattas and Pindarees, disturbers of the public peace not long previously quelled.

Missions were still in their infancy; they could only be said to flourish in favoured localities like Tinnevelly and Travancore. Christianity was unknown between Calcutta and Madras, save for some effort in Orissa made by the Baptists. As Dr. Duff showed, 92$\frac{1}{7}$ out of every 100 children of school-going age in Bengal were destitute of every kind and degree of instruction. "Not till Dalhousie was Governor-General was anything done for Upper India save by the missionaries."

Some care was beginning to be shown for the spiritual welfare of Europeans, which had been scandalously neglected. Warren Hastings has recorded that during his whole tenure of office as

Governor-General, no doctor was found for his body nor chaplain for his soul. Bishop Heber mentioned that he met a lady at Nussurabad who during seven years had never seen a clergyman and had had no opportunity of going to church; also there was at or near Tipperat a good and religious man, three hundred miles from any place of worship, who occasionally went to Chittagong to receive the Sacrament—farther from his residence than York from London. There were instances, in those days of darkness and irreligion, of men calling themselves Christians, and military men of high standing, becoming Mahometans, erecting mosques, or in other cases, so far as they could, joining the Hindus and worshipping idols. The connection between the Government and idolatry was sadly intimate. A writer in the *Church Missionary Intelligencer*, September 1887, gives a graphic account of how, as of old the Doge in the Bucentaur wedded the Adriatic, the East India Company annually married the Goddess of Madras, even in 1838, after Bishop Wilson arrived in India. The threat by Bishop Blomfield of circulating the description broadcast through England brought about a perpetual divorce from idolatry. Much good, however, had been effected by faithful chaplains, such as Buchanan, Brown, Henry Martyn, Corrie, Fisher, Dealtry, and others, so that when Daniel Wilson arrived there were scattered throughout India, in cantonments and civil stations, godly men, faithful servants of their Heavenly Master; while in the presidency towns men of perfervid zeal, like Duff and Dr. John Wilson, were earnestly and mightily promoting Christian education.

When Daniel Wilson reached India many questions demanded his attention. Communication with

England took up much time; so chaplains and missionaries were much left to themselves. In cases of difficulty the former had to contend as best they could with commanding officers, often impatient and careless of ecclesiastical scruples. Henry Martyn's letters abound with instances of this description. Chaplains too were far from being always judicious or right-minded. There was much that needed to be set in order. It was well that the new bishop had a strong prejudice in favour of law and order. He was somewhat of a martinet, as soldiers would have it. In Lord William Bentinck, who was then Governor-General, he found an earnest Christian gentleman, ready to sympathise with him in every good work, but free from all denominational peculiarities, and by no means disposed to surrender the control of the chaplains into episcopal hands.

After two years engaged in setting things in order at headquarters, the Bishop proceeded on his first Visitation. It occupied in all its extent three years. The Visitation opened with a charge delivered by the Bishop in what was then the cathedral. Twenty-one clergy answered to their names. At that time, including the clergy of all descriptions belonging to the Church of England, there were nearly one hundred and twenty, excluding missionaries, in all India.

In reality seventy years ago a Visitation in India did not correspond to our English ideas at all. It was rather a journey of exploration and discovery. Vast tracts, equal in size to European countries, were passed through with very little halting; for, except in some of the towns, there were no Christians to be met with. In some places a small handful of Europeans were the only persons professing to be Christians. In Daniel Wilson's time things had somewhat mended, but a little while previously the narrative of Bishop Heber is necessarily rather that of a traveller in foreign countries than of a bishop in his diocese. Missions could not in those days be the chief object of official peregrination. The Bishop went forth as the head of the Ecclesiastical Department to visit the Government servants placed officially under him, precisely as the Commander-in-chief visited the military servants of the Crown and Company. The inspection of the rest of the clergy was an incident in the course of a bishop's official duties—a work voluntarily undertaken, rather connived at than encouraged by Government. It was a duty incumbent upon him as a Christian bishop in that separate capacity. Need it be said that this duty was undertaken by Bishop Wilson with hearty goodwill, and no small benefit to the missionary cause?

Even, however, where there were no Missions in the stations he visited, he exerted himself vigorously to arouse a missionary spirit in communities too often careless and apathetic about the responsibilities devolving on them as dwellers in a heathen land. With a most intense desire to communicate in all directions the Gospel which he preached, Daniel Wilson set forth on his long and arduous journey. He first made his way to Penang and Singapore, thence to Ceylon—then a prey to ecclesiastical dissension. The comment upon this portion of the Visitation is, "The Holy Spirit loves no scenes of strife and contention, and here they abounded." Thence the Bishop pursued his voyage to Madras, during which he was exposed to a great storm in an ill-found steamer. "I can do no more," said the captain; "tell the Bishop he had better go to prayers." While the storm was raging, he read to his fellow-passengers St. Paul's narrative of his shipwreck. God listened to the voice of His servants and brought them out of their distresses. He made "the storm a calm, so that the waves thereof were still," but nine days had been spent in steaming from Trincomalee to Madras. Here most important questions, still agitating the Church of Christ, awaited his intervention.

Much has, at various times, been written on the subject of caste in India, and strenuous efforts have been made to represent it as only, or mainly, a civil distinction analogous to distinctions of rank in Europe. It would be out of place here to enter into this controversy, but a statement of the actual condition of affairs when Bishop Wilson was called upon to adjudicate upon it is indispensable. The stronghold of it was in the Missions in Tanjore and Trichinopoly, which had been called into existence by Schwartz and his fellow-labourers. They had resisted and discountenanced it, but were too few to cope with it, and were perhaps not in all cases sufficiently alive to its insidious developments. Repressed at first, it had for a century gathered strength, and was now thoroughly incorporated with the Christianity of the district.

"Idolatrous usages were retained. Soodras and pariahs refused to mingle in the house of God. At the Holy Communion the higher caste first drew near, and would not touch the cup if a low-caste man preceded them. A soodra priest or catechist, whilst not refusing to minister in a pariah village, would not live in it. And, on the other hand, a soodra would not allow a pariah priest or catechist to preach the Gospel to him or to baptize his child. Even the missionaries were accounted as unclean, and a native priest of the higher caste has been known to refuse food and shelter to two European missionaries on their journey, lest food and vessels should be defiled. Christians attended at the heathen feasts ; they bore the heathen marks upon their foreheads ; they prohibited the marriage of widows ; they would allow no marriage but in their own caste ; and in no less than fifty ways they were assimilated with the heathen." It was elicited by inquiry "that in some places it was customary not only to administer the sacred elements to the soodras before the pariahs were permitted to approach, but that the concluding prayers were required to be read, and the soodras dismissed, before the pariahs communicated." In some places, also, a separate cup was tolerated, the soodras using one, the missionaries and the pariahs the other. Bishop Heber had intended to take up the question, but was prevented by death ; and now it was before Bishop Wilson, who was greeted on his arrival at Madras with the intelligence that in the previous year no less than one hundred and sixty-eight Christians had apostatised to heathenism, only through the retention of caste.

The problem could not have fallen into better hands. All the most admirable traits of Bishop Wilson had free scope in dealing with it. He had throughout life been prompt, fearless, resolute, and energetic. But he was by no means deficient in a spirit of Christian love and meekness, which tempered his natural qualities, and qualified him to exercise consideration for infirmities, so enabling him to form righteous judgments. It is singular to relate that in this matter of discipline in the native Church, Europeans of high rank and in high command interfered actively in support of caste. Even the Governor-General at one time seemed strongly inclined to interpose. When the ostentatious pertinacity with which native Christians had been ignored by all the authorities of the British Government is borne in mind, probably few events in history have been more singular and paradoxical than this interference of Englishmen of exalted rank on behalf of those who viewed them themselves as pariahs, with whom intercourse was defilement.

The course adopted by the Bishop was clear and decided. He declared that " those who retained their caste were not properly and truly members of Christ's body. They halted between two opinions." In the strongest manner he confirmed the removal of those who refused to renounce the distinctions of caste. He held the removal of such offenders to be like the separation of a diseased limb—indispensable to the safety of the body. At the same time he urged that those who had been overtaken in the fault should be restored in the spirit of meekness in case any of them began to relent; but there must be no compromise.

To the Government he wrote, as he was most justly entitled to do, that the matter was one for spiritual cognisance alone, and fell under ecclesiastical authority; that the Missions in the south were wholly independent of the Government; that the complaints were groundless; the punishments for turbulence just; and that the missionaries were acting under his direction in attempting to mitigate evils of long continuance by striking at the root of them. Eventually, after long delay, Government admitted that the matter was not within its cognisance. Almost at personal risk the Bishop met the malcontents in Trichinopoly and Tanjore. His Christian manliness was not without good effect. He did not eradicate caste: the evil was scotched, not killed; but the Christian Church owes him a debt of gratitude for the noble stand which he took on this memorable occasion.

After his anxious sojourn at Madras, the Bishop returned for a brief season to Calcutta before prosecuting his Visitation further. On resuming it he made his way to Travancore. He there preached in the Syrian churches, two thousand persons on one occasion being present, the Metran presiding. Goa was then visited, where the Inquisition had recently been abolished, and the entire building, dungeons and all, destroyed five years previously to the Bishop's visit. Bombay was afterwards reached, where, in striking contrast to Ceylon, all "was at peace and all that was done tended to edification." A journey to the Himalayas had then to be undertaken. It involved a succession of one hundred marches, through countries in many parts unsettled and by no means safe. Elephants, camels, hackeries, or country carts, with their attendants, were furnished from the commissariat stores, but horses, servants, palanquin bearers, etc., had to be provided at no small expense by the travellers. The great military stations of Kirkee and Poonah, Ahmednuggur and Aurungabad, abounding in glorious recollections of the past, were inspected. But there was only one missionary station in the Bombay Presidency, namely, that at Nasik, where the father of the late Dean Farrar was toiling with no encouragement. Nasik is one of the strongest holds of Hinduism, and is reputed a most holy place by Brahmins. On 26th March 1836 Delhi was reached, but the Bishop had seen much to fill his mind with distress at the condition to which Europeans, removed for a long period from the ordinances of religion, had been reduced. In Simla the Bishop found shelter and a temporary home for four months.

It was on his return from Simla that Wilson first caught sight of the Punjab, a country then scarcely known. Rising from the deck of the vessel in which he was sailing down the Sutlej, he exclaimed aloud, "I take possession of this land in the name of my Lord and Master Jesus Christ." This was in 1836.

Years later, after terrible conflicts, England annexed the country, the Lawrences, Sir H. Edwardes, Sir D. Macleod, Sir Robert Montgomery being its rulers. Christianity, so persistently discouraged in other districts by Government officials, here had freedom and the countenance of Christian example.

On his return to Delhi the Bishop consecrated the church built by Colonel Skinner, a celebrated cavalry officer, commander of the famous body of light horse known by his name. The incident is a curious one, illustrative of old Indian life led by the English in bygone days. The Colonel, whose father had held a command in the Mahratta army, was introduced at an early age into that army, and saw much service of a wild kind in those fearful days. In 1806 he entered the English service, raising a body of irregular cavalry. He had married a Mahometan lady, who still remained so; but he himself, unlike many Europeans similarly circumstanced, had continued a Christian, and brought up his sons in the Christian faith. Years previously, when he had entered Delhi with a conquering army, he had vowed that an English Church should uplift the cross among the minarets of the Mahometans. The vow was now fulfilled, and the aged soldier, with his three sons, knelt before the Bishop in the church which he had built, to dedicate himself, as he had previously dedicated it, to the service of God.

From Delhi the Bishop made his way to Calcutta, visiting many important stations as he passed along, and in March 1837 closed for the time the long journeyings, in which he had traversed more than 13,000 miles by sea and land.

As in India the Episcopate might be said to be almost a new thing, even to members of the Church of England long separated from home associations, it is no marvel that differences should have occasionally sprung up among the members of his own communion when the office was filled by so vigorous a prelate as Daniel Wilson. Soon both clergy and laity fretted under it. In one of his despatches the Duke of Wellington, when he was General Wellesley, has placed it on record that in all his intercourse with official personages he had hardly ever come across one who could manage to avoid giving way to irritation. The Duke attributed much of this to the climate. Hepatitis and prickly heat are severe trials even to the most serene Christianity. Neither the Bishop nor those whom he came across were exempt from human infirmities. These differences have been passed over because they were transient in duration, and as often as not were the result of earnest zeal for what was deemed to be right. But the portrait of character would be incomplete without allusion to them.

It was about this time that the publication of the "Tracts for the Times" took place. In the important controversy resulting, Bishop Wilson took an active and leading part. His opposition to the system propounded in them was firm, consistent, and unwavering. He smelt the battle afar off, and roused himself to the struggle. In the Charge which preluded his second Visitation he delivered his soul. None who were privileged to hear it could so long as life lasted have forgotten the powerful warnings he delivered: they thrilled the inmost souls of the hearers.

The second Visitation was not so extensive as the first. It was confined mainly to what was then termed the Presidency of Bengal, the diocese proper of Calcutta. Again it commenced with the Straits Settlements, but the chief incident was the visit to Krishnaghur in 1839. The Church Missionary Society had established itself there in 1832. As is recorded in the *Life of Dr. Duff*, by 1838 whole villages had sought instruction, and hundreds of earnest men and women under purely spiritual influences were baptized, and proved their sincerity by suffering persecution unmoved. A native messenger was sent by the missionaries to the Bishop, entreating him to come over and help them. He went from station to station, examining, preaching, encouraging, confirming. It is said he could hardly sleep from agitation, joy, and anxiety to direct everything aright. On one occasion he presided at the baptism of nine hundred Hindus and Mahometans. This glorious dawn was subsequently overcast. Caste crept in, and, the sacerdotalism of Jesuit priests recognising caste, wrought unspeakable havoc.

It was about this time that the Bishop conceived the project of building a cathedral, and of the Additional Clergy Society, to supplement the general lack of chaplains, who were almost exclusively confined to the great military stations. What was his own spiritual frame of mind then may be gathered from the following interesting extract from an address sent to the Islington Clerical Meeting which was to assemble in January 1840. "There is nothing worth living for but Christ, and He is indeed worth living for, and dying for too. Nothing but the atonement of Christ for justification; nothing but the Spirit and sanctifying grace of Christ for obedience to the will of God; nothing but the power of Christ for victory over every enemy; nothing but the blessed example of Christ for the pattern of lovely and meek holiness; nothing but the mercy of Christ for the hope of everlasting life at last. As I grow older, my religion is much more simple. None but Christ. None but Christ."

In 1839 the Bishop went forth as Metropolitan to visit the churches in India and Ceylon. The anomaly which had made it necessary for those who sought episcopal ordination to travel from Australia, New Zealand, or the Cape in days when no facilities for travelling existed, was now at an end. In India itself suffragan sees had been created, which left to the Bishop of Calcutta the north of the land, Hindustan proper, without the Deccan, as his peculiar charge.

Again in the Madras diocese Bishop Wilson had to confront caste. In Tanjore he declared, "on its being honestly and irrevocably abolished the life of these Missions depends." In Tinnevelly he was delighted with the flourishing condition of the Missions there. After his visitation of the South and Bombay he returned to Calcutta, and thence he made his way again to Simla. Severe illness was the result of these exertions, and, with a frame sorely enfeebled with jungle fever, the Bishop set out in 1845 to recruit his strength by a visit to England.

When Bishop Wilson landed in England a violent ecclesiastical contest was raging. His prescience had foretold consequences already manifesting themselves. It was a noble feature in his character that none of these things moved him from a straightforward course in what he felt to be right. Credit is also due to those who differed from him; if they could not agree with him, they listened respectfully to what he uttered with the weight of age, of experience, of authority. There may have been, as his biographer intimates, "great searchings of heart," but there was no open breach, even with those disposed to be his adversaries.

Great kindness was shown the Bishop by Queen Victoria and Prince Albert; the Queen giving a superb set of Communion plate for the new cathedral, and sanctioning the transfer to Calcutta of an east window which had been intended by George III. for erection in St. George's Chapel at Windsor.

In the May of 1845 he preached the annual sermon for the Church Missionary Society at St. Bride's. Thirty years previously he had, when it was a day of small things with the Society, been the anniversary preacher. It is without example, except in his case, for one person twice to fulfil the same office. But he had been "true and faithful" to the great principle upheld by the Society, and now he could testify from personal knowledge of the great and blessed work which, by God's grace, it had so far been permitted to accomplish. His text on the occasion was, "They overcame by the blood of the Lamb."[1] Pleasant visits among dear old friends, much preaching at important centres, and a vast amount of business filled up every spare moment of what was to have been rest and holiday; but still a measure of restored health and strength was granted, and all was accomplished with cheerfulness and success. Once again he made his way round the Cape of Good Hope, and reached Calcutta in December 1845, refreshed both in mind and body. On his arrival he drove to his cathedral, and with all the clergy in and around Calcutta, offered up thanksgiving unto God.

Between the consecration of the cathedral of Calcutta and the deposition of the Bishop's remains in it a space of twelve years elapsed, the closing portion of his career. He felt that he was not what he had been, and that, to use his own phrase, he must "go softly"; but the years were years of continued usefulness in many important ways. Three more Visitations were got through; in one instance extending as far as the outlying island of Borneo. His charges were carefully prepared; he preached incessantly with vigour and efficiency until within the last four or five months before his death, and in all ways ably fulfilled the duties of his important office, some reasonable allowance being made for great age and considerable infirmity.

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[1] Revelation xii. 11.

His cathedral was a project in which he took the deepest interest. It was intended to answer a threefold purpose. It was to be a parish church for a large district of Calcutta. It was to be the cathedral of the metropolitical see of Calcutta, where all episcopal functions were to be performed. It was, furthermore, to have been served by a body of clergy under the designation of dean and chapter, who "were to bear a missionary character and carry out missionary objects." In this last respect the cathedral, like Bishop's College, was a failure. The endowment fund for this purpose was subsequently transferred to the great missionary societies of the Church, with certain restrictions. Toward the erection and endowment of this cathedral the Bishop at various times gave between twenty and thirty thousand pounds. His generosity was indeed unbounded; it proved in manifold ways a stimulus to good works of all descriptions throughout the length and breadth of his vast diocese. The princely charities in which he indulged were not reserved till after his decease, but bestowed freely as God prospered him. He promoted heartily church building in India at a time when places of worship were sorely needed; but his concern was great, and his liberality extreme, for the living ministry, which should be efficacious for the winning of souls to Christ. His satisfaction was great at the completion of his cathedral. About the same time the Court of Directors had sent out "a fierce letter" about any more churches being built. The Bishop, noticing it, characteristically adds: "Thank you; I have got my cathedral." His want was "two or three men of God to supply it."

Some years of service still remained, which were diligently employed. But there were not wanting, some few years before his death, indications that his earthly tabernacle was being dissolved. His voice was failing him; his hearing was affected. Several times he met with accidents, in one of which he fractured his thigh severely. Nor were other warnings from physical infirmity withheld. The Bishop faced all these intimations of departure with manly and characteristic Christian courage. His great ambition now was, while doing with all his might whatever had to be done, to end well.

A glimpse of the home life of the Bishop in the closing period of his life may not be without interest. It was in 1855 that good Mrs. Ellerton, the mother-in-law of Bishop Corrie of Madras, a lady universally respected for her genuine piety, unaffected simplicity, and extensive usefulness, came to end her days in the Bishop's palace. She had been a resident in Bengal for more than half a century, and could recall the time when a lady going to the Mission-house one Sunday morning was asked seriously, "Can you really venture there at all without any one to protect you?" Somewhat later she had seen Lord Mornington in church, fully dressed in his robes, with the Order of the Garter, and all accompanying jewels. He had ordered all the heads of offices to attend, and the church was crowded. It turned the tide of irreligion, and this strange incident became an important era in the history of the Church of India.

In 1857 the Indian Mutiny had begun. When the Bishop preached at Barrackpore, General Hearsey surrounded the church with a guard of soldiers. "We are all passengers together on a sinking ship," was the feeling of the Bishop, and he invited all ministers and missionaries of every name and denomination in Calcutta to meet and unite with him in prayer. The Governor-General would not interfere authoritatively, but left him to do as he pleased. The meeting for united prayer was held and well attended. The last sermon publicly addressed to India by the Bishop was preached on this day of humiliation.

The last words written by the Bishop were, "Firm in hope." The last words he is known to have spoken were uttered to his dear and faithful friend, Archdeacon Pratt, who advised him to compose himself to sleep. "Sleep!" he replied; "I am asleep already. I am talking in my sleep." Death in his case was felt without being realised. It was the sleep of death. Without a struggle or sigh the soul left its earthly tenement, and in that hour the Master had granted the oft-repeated prayer that his services might "end well." Beside him were the broken watch which he had let fall, the unfinished letter, and the oft-read Bible.

When Daniel Wilson was a Scholar at Oxford he gained the English Essay for "Common Sense." It was his own special characteristic through life. Goethe out of his death-bed darkness was asking for light—more light. Daniel Wilson had, as Archdeacon Pratt reminded him in his dying moments, been all his life long "walking in the light." He had his failings and his eccentricities, but, as was said over his lifeless body, he was a brave and noble soldier—a wise, bold leader.

In October 1857 Dr. Duff wrote of Bishop Wilson as "a man on whom age had conferred the spiritual sagacity of a seer, in blessed union with the mellow piety of a ripened saint — a man in whose character a noble lion-like fortitude in the advocacy of pure evangelical truth was now beautifully blended and harmonised with a lamb-like demeanour in the whole of his personal conduct." The injunction in his last will was that a plain mural tablet, without ornament, should be erected in his cathedral and in St. Mary's, Islington, recording his name, day of birth, period that he was Vicar of Islington and Bishop of Calcutta, and nothing more, save the words:

῾Ο Θεὸς ἱλάσθητί μοι τῷ ἁμαρτωλῷ (Luke xviii. 13).[1]

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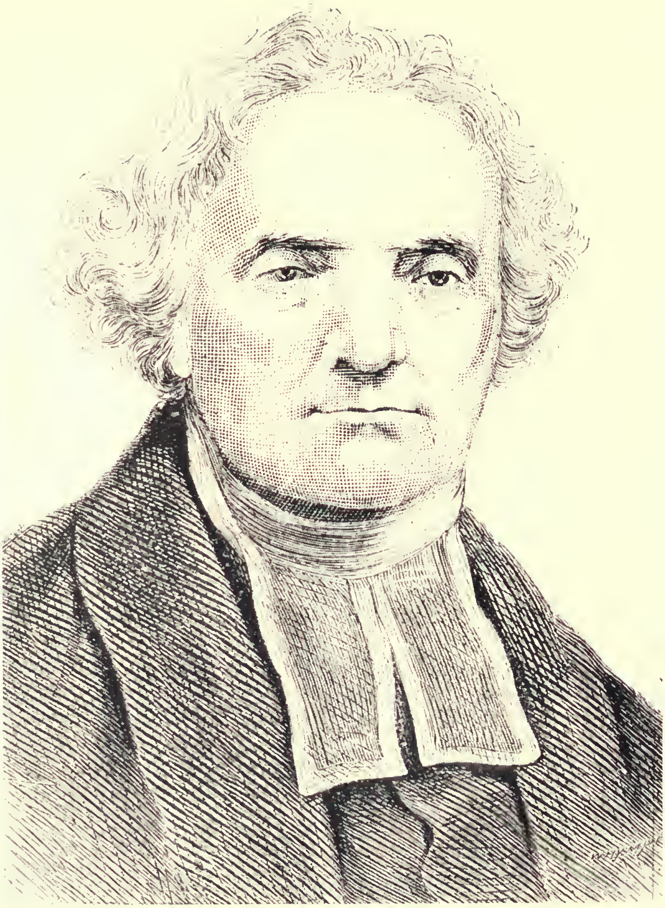
[1] "God be merciful to me the sinner."



THOMAS CHALMERS.

THOMAS CHALMERS

(1780–1847)

By

A. Taylor Innes, M.A.

THOMAS CHALMERS was born on 17th March 1780 in the burgh town of Anstruther, in the east of Fife; he was the sixth child of a large family of fourteen. His father, John Chalmers, was a shopkeeper who had risen to be provost or mayor of the little seaport—a tall, genial, and even jovial man, with a good deal of religious feeling and fervour. His mother, Elizabeth Hall, lacked her husband's geniality and attractiveness, being short in person and stiff and unbending in manner; but she was at least his equal in strength and energy of religious principle, which as years went on more and more mellowed her character.

Amid so large a household young Tom Chalmers had of course very much to take his chance, and the case was not very different after he went, at the early age of three, to a carelessly-taught parish school. At school and at home alike he showed no indications of genius, and no tendencies to study. He was known merely as one of the idlest, strongest, and merriest of the boys of the town, with a certain impetuousness in everything he did, and a "redundant energy of temperament," as he afterwards described it, which impelled him to be always doing something. There seems to have been also an occasional abstraction of mind, which may have foreshadowed the more speculative side of his later career.

But with Chalmers, as with many young Scotsmen of all classes, the intellectual birth-time was not till he went to college. In his case, indeed, as he became a student at St. Andrews at the boyish age of twelve, the first two years of attendance there were very much wasted. Not till his third session, and at the still unripe age of fourteen, did the youth come under those influences which were to mould the man. It was mathematics, the most abstract of studies, which originally kindled the intellect of the most practical Scotsman of his century. For ten years from his third session at college, this science, with the kindred subjects of natural philosophy and chemistry, were young Chalmers's delight, and to become a professor of mathematics was his highest ambition.

Yet the mind, when it wakens, wakens to all around it; and the year he entered the mathematical class was the great year of the Revolution—1793. When John Knox, three centuries before, went as a youth to Glasgow University, he came there in contact with that wave of Academic Liberalism which, rising two centuries before in Paris and Bologna, was destined not to subside till it merged in the Reformation. So young Chalmers, in his fifteenth year, caught the distant crash of the political and social wave that broke that year on the Continent, and even found its ripples rushing up to his feet in quiet St. Andrews.

The professor of mathematics, Dr. James Brown, and his two distinguished assistants were described by their students in after days as "ultra Whigs, keen reformers, and what would now be called Radicals"; and Chalmers, the son of a Tory household, and all his life a Conservative in political principle, was thus brought at once in contact with that "condition of the people question" which pressed upon him afterwards continually. In this session he became a member of the "Political Society" of the University; and on its table, or in the hands of the professors, he found a book, published in the January of that year, which more than any other represented in this country the principles of the continental revolution. It was the *Political Justice* of William Godwin. Its speculations on human nature, on philosophical necessity, and on the rights of man, the boy read with avidity, and received with profound admiration; and though ere long he came to doubt the truth of Godwin's solutions of many of these social problems, the problems themselves remained part of the permanent horizon of his mind. In the meantime, however, the newly-awakened passion for demonstration, so characteristic in later years of all the utterances of the orator and author, expended itself in the study of mathematics.

In his fifteenth year Chalmers became a student of divinity, but certainly without much interest in the subject. His views now and for years to come were simply professional. As a child he had been seen to climb on a chair in the nursery and preach with ardour to the one hearer below; and his resolve to be a minister dated from the same early time. Since coming to college he had commenced English composition, and his exercises, at first plain and severe, were already passing into the style of exuberant amplification which he retained to the end. But in his theological classes and his theological professors he took no interest.

One memorable exception there was in the spring of 1796, when Chalmers was entering on his seventeenth year. At that date he happened to open the stateliest work of one whom his contemporary, Robert Hall, loved to call "the greatest of the sons of men"—Jonathan Edwards. "He studied *Edwards on Free Will*," says a class-fellow, "with such ardour that he seemed to regard nothing else, could scarcely talk of anything else, and one was almost afraid of his mind losing its balance." Here again it was a book of rigid demonstration that enchained the mind of the young Scotsman—the demonstration, as it seemed to him, of a universal necessity subordinating all things under "the magnificence of the Godhead." Not a single hour elapsed at this period, as he afterwards told a member of his family, in which this overpoweringly impressive imagination—"the glory of the sum of things"—did not stand out bright before him. Yet common hours were not enough for its contemplation. He used to rise early in the morning, and leaving behind him the grey towers of St. Andrews, he would stride far away into the country, that in the bliss of solitude his new-found conception might broaden before the inward eye. And twenty-four years afterwards, looking back on this "twelvemonth of mental elysium" from a point of nearer access to God, he writes: "O that He possessed me with a sense of His holiness and love, as He at one time possessed me with a sense of His greatness and power and His pervading agency!"

Such was the height of mental exaltation attained in his seventeenth year by one who had been but three years before an unintellectual and uneducated boy, but who was now a student for life. Yet it does not appear that the scientific enthusiasm—the passion for abstract truth—was at any time the central and regulative principle of Chalmers's career. Perhaps, indeed, in the case of so practical a man of his century, it could not be so. This seems to be partly the explanation of the ten unsatisfactory years which followed the completion of his studies at St. Andrews. Licensed in 1799 as a preacher, and presented in 1802 to the parish of Kilmany, he still continued to devote himself to mathematics and chemistry, and during successive years actually carried on classes with immense energy and success in the neighbouring university town of St. Andrews. Disappointed in 1804 and 1805 as candidate for two university chairs of science, he turned with equal activity towards philosophy and literature, and his first published work was *An Enquiry into our National Resources.* His parish work was pursued with the same eager but somewhat undiscriminating zeal. The hospitality and personal friendliness of the minister of Kilmany were acknowledged by all his parishioners. His sermons had already assumed the style of glowing and cumulative eloquence for which they were afterwards so well known. He occasionally broke out in Presbytery or Assembly with a speech which startled those around him by its fresh impetuosity; and he took every opportunity that offered of contributing to the periodical literature of his profession.

How came it that with all this incessant energy of a man now approaching his thirtieth year, Chalmers at this time gave no sign of attaining the boundless influence over others which he was very soon to exercise? It was not from any want of simplicity and sincerity, of honesty and ardour, in each of these details and fragments of his life. Now in rising manhood, as before in his boyhood and in his college days, there was an ardent and straightforward energy about everything he took up which was quite characteristic. But what his life lacked was—a centre. It had no meaning as a whole, while it wasted itself in incessant and disconnected detail. And because it had as yet no unity and no meaning, it had no influence upon others. As long as there was no fixed point on which he could himself rest, there was no fulcrum from which to move those around.

The change began in the way in which it has begun with many. That which in the case of nine-tenths of men reminds them that life is a whole, is—death. Chalmers was near his thirtieth year, and had been six years a minister, when the death of one after another of his near relatives brought him face to face with the strange fact that in this world we do not live for ever. And these blows were followed up, in the winter of 1809, by a prostrating illness which for six months shut him out of his pulpit, and for four months shut him up in his chamber, face to face with what he believed to be the approach of death.

The effect on Chalmers's views is recorded by himself in a striking incident of his later life. Long after this time, in a debate in the General Assembly, where he, as usual, was opposing all pluralities held by a minister, an opponent skilfully quoted against him some words from an anonymous pamphlet which he had published during his earlier years at Kilmany. In it the author had maintained from "the authority of his own experience, that, after the satisfactory discharge of his parish duties, a minister may enjoy five days in the week in uninterrupted leisure for the prosecution of any science in which his taste may dispose him to engage." Thus he had indeed thought, and so he had written, in those days of his devotion to mathematics. And now that the words came back to him from the accusing past, he met them amid the dead silence of the General Assembly neither with denial nor with evasion, but with the confession of "a repentant culprit" before its bar. "Alas, sir, so I thought in my ignorance and pride, strangely blinded that I was! What, sir, is the object of mathematical science? Magnitude and the proportions of magnitude. But then, sir, I had forgotten two magnitudes—I thought not of the littleness of time—I recklessly thought not of the greatness of eternity!"

So now for the first time Chalmers came to look at his life as a whole, in its true place and perspective in the universe. And the immediate result was the acknowledgment which he records on his thirtieth birthday, that "throughout those past years my whole conduct has been guided by the rambling impulse of the moment, without any direction from a sense of duty." But as in former days the impulse of the moment spent itself honestly upon fragments and details of his life, so now the awakened central sense of duty seized upon it within and without, and as a whole. Slowly month by month the pale face of death which had looked in upon him withdrew its threatening; and in like gradations life and the complications of life crowded back. And by God's grace the spark of religion which had been kindled by the former experience did not in this man's case expire when it came to deal with the latter.

His private journal, commenced at this time, is profoundly interesting, not as containing anything exceptional or unique, mentally or spiritually, but, on the contrary, as recording that most fascinating of all experiences — the slow and honest advance of an ordinary and imperfect man towards the light. His biographer, Dr. William Hanna, points out how while other men, like Loyola and Luther, have been roused to a higher life by a similar startling experience, the life in each had characteristic differences. Loyola occupied himself chiefly with the question of personal purity and spirituality; Luther with that of his justification and acceptance at the bar of God. "Dr. Chalmers busies himself mainly with the state of his affections and behaviour towards his fellow-men, with all of whom he tried to be on terms of perfect and cordial amity ere he passed into eternity." Yet his first impulse to a higher life was the recollection of another world, and his chief means of attaining it soon came to be God's message of reconciliation through Jesus Christ.

Chalmers had since his student days no speculative difficulties as to the truth of Christianity. His concern with religion was as a motive power—as a propulsive and regulating force for the new life he felt called upon to lead. How was he to lay hold upon God so as to walk among God's creatures in humility and love? Was it even a possible thing to do? This man knew, of course, that a revelation had been given expressly to supply an answer to this question. But it would appear that among a race of beings who have largely forgotten, not only their Maker, but the proportions between time and eternity, even a revelation from heaven is apt to be misconstrued by careless eyes. Chalmers's eyes were no longer careless, and they had now for a year past been fixed intently on this subject in the interest of the practical life which had begun. Yet it was only gradually, after much study and prayer (his chief assistance in the matter being the recently published *Practical View of Christianity*, by William Wilberforce), that the Scripture system assumed in his mind the clear form which he ever after preached. Nowhere is this change more distinctly put than in a letter which he writes to his brother in the year 1820.

"Somewhat about the year 1811," he says, "I had

Wilberforce's View put into my hands, and as I got on in reading it, felt myself on the eve of a great revolution in all my opinions as to Christianity. I am now most thoroughly of opinion, and it is an opinion founded on experience, that on the system of—Do this and live, no peace, and even no true and worthy obedience, can ever be attained. It is, Believe in the Lord Jesus Christ, and thou shalt be saved. When this belief enters the heart, joy and confidence enter along with it. The righteousness which we try to work out for ourselves eludes our grasp, and never can a soul arrive at true or permanent rest in pursuit of this object. The righteousness which, by faith, we put on secures our acceptance with God, and secures our interest in the promises, and gives us a part in those sanctifying influences by which we are enabled to do with aid from on high what we can never do without it. We look to God in a new light—we see Him as a reconciled Father—that love to Him which terror scares away re-enters the heart, and, with a new principle and a new power, we become new creatures in Jesus Christ our Lord."

This faith to which he thus attained became henceforth the spring of the theology which Chalmers preached. But what he ever afterwards urged upon others came first as a revelation to himself—a revelation which solved the moral problem which had oppressed him. How to cast out this and that form of sin in his life had baffled all his efforts till the problem came to be solved by what he called in his energetic delight "the expulsive power of a new affection!" For belief, if it be genuine, always becomes affection; and a central and deep belief, like that of God in Christ, necessarily becomes a commanding and controlling power.

So now the life which had formerly been dispersed over many things had at last found a unity. And beginning "to move altogether when it moved at all," it pressed outwards with tremendous power. It took effect first in Chalmers's own parish, and in his personal and pastoral relations to those around. In his own house, in the houses of the sick and dying, in intercourse with the young, in correspondence with friends whose minds were rising to spiritual things, the new life burned and spread. But it was especially in Kilmany church and pulpit that it found its scope, and from this centre the fame of the new preacher soon spread abroad. On 25th November 1814 he was elected minister of the Tron Church in Glasgow, where he preached his celebrated discourses on the connection between the discoveries of astromony and the Christian Revelation. Eager crowds listened to them, and when published 20,000 copies were sold in one year. But before going to this great centre of Scottish life, the little "Church of the Valley" in northern Fife had already seen him in possession of that amazing pulpit power which continued during his long subsequent career.

As early as 1816, Lord Jeffrey, the greatest critic of the age and then editor of the *Edinburgh Review*, heard Chalmers speak in Edinburgh. "It reminds me," he said, "more of what one reads as the effect of the eloquence of Demosthenes than anything I ever heard."

Dr. Wardlaw of Glasgow, himself one of the most eloquent preachers of that age, has given a description, not so much of Chalmers as of the effect on his audience of the successive climaxes of the preacher's style. After each "there is a pause. The moment is embraced—there is free breathing—suppressed coughs get vent—postures are changed—there is a universal stir, as of persons who could not have endured the constraint much longer—the preacher bends forward—his hand is raised—all is again hushed. The same stillness and strain of unrelaxed attention is repeated, more intent still, it may be, than before, as the interest of the subject and of the speaker advance. And so, for perhaps four or five times in the course of a sermon, there is the *relaxation* and the '*at it again*' till the final winding up." And the effect of such a winding up of a paragraph is described by another hearer about the same time in these words: "It was a transcendently grand—a glorious burst. Intense emotion beamed from his countenance. I cannot describe the appearance of his face better than by saying, as Foster said of Hall's, it was 'lighted up almost into a glare.' The congregation, in so far as the spell under which I was allowed me to observe them, were intensely excited, leaning forward in the pews like a forest bending under the power of the hurricane—looking stedfastly at the preacher, and listening in breathless wonderment."

The enthusiasm of Edinburgh and Glasgow in these two years was almost exceeded in the following year in London. "All the world wild about Dr. Chalmers," says Wilberforce, the friend of Pitt; and going to hear him preach at London Wall, he records in his diary "how greatly Canning was affected: at times he was quite melted into tears." A passage on Irish character affected him in this way. Canning's own verdict as he stepped out of the church was more emphatic still: "The tartan beats us all!"

And this overwhelming effect he produced almost invariably, notwithstanding many things in his appearance and manner which did not tend to prepare for it.

"His great massive head, his broad forehead, and white necktie thrown carelessly around his neck, and as crumpled as if he had slept in it," together with his "broad Scotch accent, the broadest I have ever heard," astonished his English audiences, and did not prepossess those even of Scotland, until his peculiarities had become known and dear to all. Then his style was to the last not admirable according to any rule. It was a torrent of cumbrous and big-sounding Latinisms, in defence of which all that his admirers can say is that "as was the man, so was the style—not a fine clarified liquid, but a fermentation of genius and goodness."[1] And stranger even than this uncouth manner and turbid style is the fact that the subject of this most impressive orator's addresses was generally an abstract proposition—a general truth, which he set himself not so much to illustrate as to prove, and to prove usually by reiterated and cumulative demonstration!

Chalmers was not a mere popular preacher. For the greatest part of his life the pulpit was not even part of his professional duty. He was elected to a Glasgow church, as we have seen, in 1814; but in 1823 he left it to become professor of moral philosophy in the University of St. Andrews. In 1828 he exchanged that chair for the professorship of theology in the University of Edinburgh. His university chair of theology he resigned at the disruption of the Church in 1843, in obedience to a still existing law which restricts it to Presbyterians of the Established Church alone. But he was at once appointed principal and professor of theology in the Free Church College of Edinburgh, and he held that central office till his death. He was thus for twenty-three years a teacher of academic science, moral and divine.

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[1] James Dodds, of London, whose *Biographical Study of Dr. Chalmers* is penetrating and powerful.

The works which he published were very numerous; they fill more than thirty volumes. Among his apologetic, theological, expository, and devotional ones may be mentioned his Bridgewater Treatise *On the Adaptation of External Nature to the Moral and Intellectual Constitution of Man;* his *Lectures on Natural Theology*, containing his masterly refutation of Hume's objection to miracles; his *Institutes of Theology*, in which he sought to "combine into one complete and harmonious system the varied testimonies of the Divine Record as they lay scattered over the sacred page"; his *Lectures on the Epistle to the Romans;* and his *Daily Bible Readings.*

Whether Chalmers was a man with much scientific faculty of construction may be doubted. None of his many volumes indicate the power of the system-builder in philosophy. But we should mistake if we thought that his work does not contain high intellectual qualities. To mention no other qualities, Dr. Chalmers had, in all the regions of thought to which he turned, more or less of that which John Stuart Mill ascribes to him in the matter of economic science—he "always had the merit of studying phenomena at first hand." This (which in other words is *originality*) impressed those who met Chalmers as characterising even his most ordinary converse. And it extended into all mental departments with which he had to deal. His early enthusiasm for chemistry and mathematics was succeeded by a like direct and passionate contact with morals and divinity. In the lower regions he dealt with facts—or phenomena, as Mill calls them—rather than with mere representations of them: with facts at first hand. And in the higher regions he dealt with truth at first hand rather than with orthodoxy; for orthodoxy he took to be truth at second hand. And this admirable mental quality was connected with a certain massiveness and deliberation in the acquisition of his ideas, which contrasted strongly with the impetuosity with which he afterwards delivered them to others. What Chalmers did as a seeker was to bare his own mind to the truth. And then, slowly and gradually, one or two big facts came to him "at first hand," and grew upon him till they were accepted as the facts ruling in the region, or called for by the time.

And it was one result of this that in dealing with the truth which he had received, his mind moved on it as on a hinge: it became to him for the time the "cardinal" point of the universe. "Give me," he used to say as each new public question came up—"give me the one main point of the case and I will work it out: I cannot scatter myself over a multitude of points." So when the one great point with which he dealt was moral or religious, it did not matter to him that it might seem to many to be also an abstract or general one. That such a truth was abstract often meant to him simply that it was universal—to be received by all, and to be urged upon all. Chalmers could not endure the idea of any private faith of his own in which any others—all others—might not share. "To him," as was well said on the day of his centenary,[1] "faith was passion, was vehemence, was mortal combat—strong enough to shake kingdoms, to break up churches, to make old things pass away and all things become new." But his faith had these vast public results because it had a certain public element in its very nature. Unconsciously to himself, perhaps, Chalmers sought truth for others as well as for himself—sought it, therefore, in that broad and simple form which all might find and feel. He saw truth, when at last he did come to see it, with a prophetic consciousness of the multitudes of his fellow-men, and especially of his fellow-countrymen near him, whom it equally concerned. And nothing is more characteristic of him—from beginning to end of his course, in sermon, in lecture, and in platform utterance—than a certain incredulous amazement and indignation that what was now so clear and luminous to himself should be hid from the view of any living man whom his voice could reach.

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[1] By Dr. John Cairns.

For the same passionate outgoing of Chalmers upon his fellow-men which made him the greatest preacher of Scotland in last century, made him also its greatest statesmen and organiser. His public work, various as its aspects from time to time became, may all be summed up as in different ways a work of organisation—organisation of Christian energy. Nor is this strange. Organisation of some kind, statesmanship in some form, was sure to result in Scotland when so great a force was liberated. In that northern land, the religion of the individual, it has been remarked, always results in a religion of the community. Chalmers, too, had said of himself as a young man, that nature intended him to be a military engineer, and his life-work has been well described as that of a "moral engineer." When meeting Guizot in Paris, in 1838, he records his delight in the agreement expressed by the statesman with his own view that "the solution of all the great problems lay in the reciprocal influence of the moral and the economical"—identifying the moral, however, with Christian influence. We have already seen how even in early youth he had come to share in the great continental and revolutionary impulse as to the secular welfare of the people. And now in Christian manhood the needs and claims of his fellow-men, the wants and capabilities of the masses, surrounded his imagination continually. But they still haunted him, characteristically, as a problem, a question to which the Christian mathematician must be able, and is therefore bound, to furnish a solution.

The first great experiment which was made by Dr. Chalmers was the attempt to solve a secular problem—not a religious or ecclesiastical one. It was the question of pauperism, and to it he for a time almost devoted himself. He had come to Glasgow in 1814, to be minister of the Tron Church. But in 1819 he was translated to the new and therefore less fettered church of St. John's; the parish of which was handed over as a fresh field in which to work out his great theory. What was that theory? Nothing less than this — that throughout Scotland the Church should support the whole destitute poor; and that the parish of St. John's should lead the way by the church of St. John's supporting the whole poor of the parish.

St. John's was then not only one of the largest in the city, having upwards of ten thousand souls, but it was the poorest parish of all. And the proposal and offer which on its behalf he made to the authorities was this—"to relinquish for the future all claim upon the fund raised by legal assessment; to conduct this large population, the cost of whose pauperism averaged £1400 annually, into the condition of an unassessed country parish, and to provide for all its indigence out of the fund raised by voluntary contributions at the church doors."

To this theory and experiment Chalmers was urged by a twofold long-cherished conviction. One part of that conviction was economical. He denied the right of men to call upon the public to stand between them and poverty; and he believed that the idea of a legal claim on the public by the poor was destructive of the feeling of honourable independence on the one hand, and that of natural obligation of relatives and friends on the other. But along with this there was the other conviction that while private charity was better than legal claim even for him who received the charity, it was infinitely better for those whose duty it was to exercise the charity. What they were called upon to exemplify in its exercise was a wise and discriminating and individual kindliness—the only effectual form in which that Christian and unselfish compassion which takes up the burden not legally imposed can do its work.

Under convictions like these, various in their origin but convergent in their tendency, Chalmers built in his own mind a charitable Utopia for Scotland, and began, with his twenty-five deacons, his great experiment of St. John's. And his experiment was a wonderful success. At the end of four years not only had the expense during these years of all they had undertaken been defrayed, not only had an additional burden of £90 a year in respect of the hospital patients of the parish been assumed, but there was a surplus of £900 in hand; while their previous expenditure of £1400 per annum was now reduced to £280. It was done with a vast expenditure of personal energy and discriminating care—with a care by which every application was sifted and every deserving applicant was personally relieved. But it was done; and Chalmers looked up with the hope that what was done in St. John's might be repeated in every parish, first in Glasgow and then throughout Scotland.

Was that dream ever realisable? It was, at all events, not destined to be realised. Even in Glasgow no one of the other parishes adopted it; and after St. John's struggled on for eighteen years under the disadvantages of an exceptional system for which no provision was made around, it too gave it up. Chalmers, now settled in the east of Scotland, still held to his theory; but by this time the Church, from whose voluntary exertions in things outside her mere church work he hoped so much, had got into difficulties with the State about her proper and internal affairs. In 1840 Dr. Alison and others successfully urged upon the Legislature the institution of a poor law founded upon a legal right of relief to the aged and infirm. But in that very year the Church, to which Dr. Chalmers looked to show by its example a better way, was within a short distance of disruption, and Dr. Chalmers himself had been called off from other things to act in that conflict as her most energetic champion.

And still more unfortunately, in 1845, when the Poor Law Statute was actually passed, Chalmers and his Church were already overwhelmed with the work of providing shelter and support for its now houseless ministers and congregations. It was hopeless to ask for any arrest of judgment. It was not merely that the champion was otherwise occupied. It was that his best argument was taken away. And from that day to this Chalmers's idea of a country in which the Church shall undertake the whole burden of supporting the poor has been held to be a hopeless dream.

The next chapter in Dr. Chalmers's life, which in one view indeed occupied it till its close, was that devoted to the important work of Church Extension. This at least was a work which belonged to him properly as a Christian minister. The seed had been sown in his heart at Kilmany, and it spread and grew into the form of Church Extension from the moment in which he came into contact with the masses of the great city of the west of Scotland.

As early as 1817 Dr. Chalmers had urged that Glasgow should not be content without the erection of twenty new parochial churches; and though the proposal was then generally regarded as visionary, some of those who heard it, and who had followed Chalmers during his eight years' ministry there, had never lost sight of it. Now, in 1834, when Chalmers, after a few years' unsatisfactory residence in St. Andrews, had come as professor to Edinburgh, his Glasgow friends put the proposal into practical form. A committee of merchants was formed, and in a few months £20,000 was subscribed to start with. The Church Building Society of Glasgow thus formed set itself to its work with the constant co-operation of the great preacher, now at Edinburgh; and the result was that by the year 1841 the twentieth church was completed. But the same year, 1834, which for the first time gave Dr. Chalmers and the Evangelical party a majority in the General Assembly, saw the origin of a great Church Extension movement not in Glasgow alone. In the Tron parish there his own personal surveys had satisfied him that of the working-classes generally not one-half attended church. In the village of the Water of Leith, near which his Edinburgh house now stood, it appeared that out of thirteen hundred people only one hundred and forty had taken seats in any place of worship. But facts like these were repeated in all parts of Scotland, though of course they were most striking in the great towns. Since the days of the Reformation the population of Scotland had doubled, and fourteen hundred churches should have been added to make accommodation for the increase.

Little or nothing had for a long time been attempted by the Church established; though the various bodies which had formed the United Presbyterian Church had done a great work, for the religion of the heart and conscience, in their gradual growth from the days of the first Secession of 1733 and the second of 1752.

Now, however, the first reforming Assembly gave the strongest pledge of its new life by appointing Dr. Chalmers to be convener of its Committee on Church Accommodation, with powers co-ordinate with those of other committees for Propagating the Gospel abroad and for Education at home. The General Assembly at the same time passed an Act admitting the ministers of new congregations sanctioned by the Church to the full status of parochial ministers—a measure at the time supposed to be within the native powers of the Church. Scarcely had the Assembly dissolved, when Dr. Chalmers called his enthusiastic committee together and addressed them. "I trust, gentlemen," he said, "the committee will not relax in its exertions, and not relinquish them, even though it should require the perseverance of a whole generation, till we have made it a sufficiently thick-set establishment and brought it into a state of full equipment."

So amid the glow of a new day rising over Scotland the enterprise was begun.

Dr. Chalmers was at first full of hope that funds for the new and great enterprise of his Church might be got from Parliament; and the King's Speech of 1835 called the Legislature to give "earnest attention to the condition of the Church of Scotland, and to the means by which it may be enabled to increase the opportunities of religious worship for the poorer classes of society." But in a short time it was clear that nothing was to be hoped from this quarter. The justice of the Church retaining her existing endowments was called in question in the so-called "voluntary controversy"; and the political result was for the time not unequally divided. On the one hand, Dr. Chalmers's lectures, delivered in London, in defence of Church establishments in general, and that of his own Church in particular, excited great enthusiasm by their eloquence and power. On the other, it became plain that neither side of politics was likely to propose any new or additional endowments, even for a Church which had now awakened to a fresh sense of its duties and responsibilities.

In these circumstances Chalmers without hesitation threw himself upon the people, and urged them to co-operate with the voluntary effort of the Church. During the six years in which he held the convenership of this committee—years which latterly became troubled with impending agitations of another kind—the work went on; not in the great towns only, but in every locality to which his voice and the voice of the Church could reach. It was a work closely associated with the best interests of the people. For in these new churches, almost without exception, the Gospel was preached earnestly, and preached to the poor; and the people who gathered into them shared in the hopes of that stirring time. When Chalmers laid down his office in the year 1841, two hundred and twenty-two churches had already been added by the voluntary liberality of the Church of Scotland to the roll of its charges.

Long before that date, however, Dr. Chalmers had entered upon the next great chapter of his career—that in which he became the champion of his Church in the constitutional conflict between it and the courts of law down to the year 1843. It was a branch of the great question of the rights and relations of the Church and the State, a question which has for centuries reappeared in various forms, on which the minds of men are not yet by any means agreed, and on which we do not go here into details. It has been said by some that in a purely biographical point of view this era of Dr. Chalmers's career was more striking than any other, and that he was himself greater, morally, than at any other time.

It may well have been so; for Chalmers, as we have seen, was drawn reluctantly into the great conflict, and as a Conservative in politics he declined to take part in it under the first aspect in which it fascinated many Scotsmen, as a defence of popular rights. "Non-intrusion," or abolition of patronage, though he sympathised with them, were local and administrative questions in which he had little or no interest.

It was not till the later development of the struggle seemed to him to involve what he held "a truth for all ages, and all countries, and all churches"—the freedom of the Church in things spiritual from the control of the State—that he became its foremost defender. And the moment when he committed himself to what he believed to be a truth of this order was that in which it was becoming plain that he and his Church must either withdraw from their position or undergo the loss of all emolument and endowment. In its "Claim of Right" of 1842 that Church had pledged itself by a large majority not to withdraw. But the question on the morning of 18th May 1843 still was, How many, or whether any number, would be found that day to adhere to the unparalleled pledge?

It was a gray and cloudy afternoon on the ridge of the new town of Edinburgh, where masses of spectators gathered in breathless expectation round the tall spire of St. Andrew's Church. Into its interior, crowded since early dawn with a like eager multitude, the members of Assembly and the glittering *cortège* of the Queen's Commissioner had just disappeared. The doors were now shut, while Scotland waited outside.

Suddenly they seemed to be broken open, and a roar of acclamation rent the air as the ex-Moderator in his robes, and by his side the venerable face of Chalmers, were seen to appear. For following these two came the leaders of the Evangelical revival in the Church of Scotland from Highlands and Lowlands alike. The crowd surged in emotion around them, so as to make the old men in front the head of an involuntary procession. It took a few steps westward, and then, turning to the right, moved down the steep brow of that long slope which connects northern Edinburgh with the sea.

One by one the ministers then in Edinburgh who had resolved to cast in their lot with the Church, fell into the moving line. But after them marched a train of young men, the "licentiates" or candidates, who had looked forward to the benefices of the Church, but who (like all its missionaries without exception in foreign lands) chose now to belong to this its forlorn hope. Together they set their faces to the long descent into that valley of humiliation. Before them the waters of the Firth gleamed under the blue and bitter north, and beyond it stretched many a moor and strath, with the manses which the old men were the next day to leave and the young men were never to enter. Yet still the line increased, swollen now by the accession of many laymen, upon whom the Presbyterian constitution imposes the duty of ruling the Church and the honour of bearing its burdens; until at last the procession became a quarter of a mile long. And before even the head of the column had reached its destination the news had spread through Edinburgh.

Lord Jeffrey was sitting far away in his room when some one burst in with the words, "Four hundred of them are out!" Springing to his feet, the old judge exclaimed, "I am proud of my country—there is not another upon earth where such a deed could have been done!"

But by this time it was done in truth. More than one half of the members of Assembly (if enumerated according to the principles of the Church and its Claim of Right) entered Tanfield Hall, whose broad roof rose where the Water of Leith leaves Edinburgh for the sea. Within its walls was completed the signing of that "Act of Separation and Deed of Demission" by which so many as four hundred and seventy ministers at last separated from the State, and surrendered to it their parishes and life interests, while protesting that they and their people still constituted the Free Church of Scotland. But the first thing which the first Assembly of that Free Church did was to call upon Dr. Chalmers to act as its President or Moderator. Three thousand men rose to their feet as he took the chair on that gloomy afternoon; but even as he spoke the first words of invocation, "O send Thy light forth and Thy truth," a sudden radiance flashed upon him from the southern windows of the hall. It was the type of that light "arising to the upright in darkness," which at this crisis made the old man eloquent more sublime than ever, and irradiated that whole period of storm and sacrifice with an attractive splendour.

Yet we must remember that to Chalmers himself the Disruption of his Church from the State had not worn this attractive aspect. Nothing indeed could be conceived more baffling in some respects to him who had been the chief builder of the house. On a Sabbath morning in December 1841 Dr. Chalmers foresaw the blow. He had been reading a certain chapter in Genesis, and he took his pen and wrote (not to man, but, as his custom was, to God): "I too have been set on the erection of my Babel—on the establishment of at least two great objects, the deliverance of our empire from pauperism, and an adequate machinery for the Christian and general instruction of our whole population. . . . Though I cannot resign my convictions, I must now—and surely it is good to be so taught—I must now, under the experimental sense of my own helplessness, acknowledge with all humility, yet with hope in the efficacy of a blessing from on high still in reserve for the day of God's own appointed time, that 'except the Lord build the house, the builders build in vain.'"

But even as he so wrote, the good man was on the verge of the crowning achievement of his life—the great Building for which his matured powers had been reserved.

This great work, the central part of which belonged to Dr. Chalmers, may be recalled in an aspect in which it is of the highest value for all parts of the Christian Church. Now, as before, the enterprise for which Chalmers braced himself was "moral and economical"; but it was for the first time national. The question, "Who is my neighbour?" which he had originally put within the narrow limits of a country parish and afterwards in one great city after another, was now forced upon him and his co-religionists as a question for the whole of Scotland. And it was answered for the whole of Scotland by the institution of that great yearly treasury of the Free Church which afterwards came to be called its Sustentation Fund—a fund for the support of the ministry, to be contributed to by all its congregations and to be used for division among them all.

In November 1842 Dr. Chalmers unfolded to a celebrated assembly, called "the Convocation," held in view of the disruption of the following year, "no bare unfinished outline, but a complete and detailed account of that system of financial operation which was adopted afterwards without a single alteration in any of its provisions." He founded his proposal on what he called the "mighty power of littles" when they flow from permanent Christian feeling, and pointed out that the annual £100,000 he demanded would be met by "a penny a week from each family of our Scottish population." What was needed was that the Christian feeling should shape for itself a Christian organisation; and for this it was not enough to have the ordinary Scottish Presbytery.

It needed all his genius and all his faith. It was not only that he invited poor and rich congregations alike to look henceforward not on their own things but on the things of others, and to throw in their means, small or great, into one purse; it was that he called upon them to do this in the midst of exceptional difficulties and extraordinary hardships. Each of those congregations was homeless, and some of them, to whom sites to build on were refused, had to worship that winter and even for years after in the open air. The ministers had left the manses, and not incomes only but dwellings had to be provided for them. All the parish schoolmasters, all the professors of the universities, and all the preachers or candidates, who adhered to the outgoing Church, and the whole of the foreign missionaries, without exception, were left penniless, and had to be immediately provided for. Even Chalmers's new churches, built during the previous ten years by the liberality of the Church itself, were taken away, and their places too had to be supplied. Yet in the midst of this scene of desolation the building of the house began, and its success astonished all except the wisely enthusiastic old man who sat at the centre.

It was but a small part of this success that Chalmers himself during the four remaining years of his life was permitted to see. It was six years after his death before the fund reached even the original minimum aimed at of £100,000 a year. But the Moses of that Exodus would have rejoiced still more had he been permitted to see the results in the form he most loved—of Church Extension. His great and crowning success, indeed, was, as we have seen, to follow long after he was himself gathered to his repose. But in the meantime there remained to him some years of a golden afternoon of life and a beautiful twilight of advancing age.

Till his death, in his sixty-eighth year, Chalmers remained the Principal of the most fully equipped theological institute in theological Scotland. Year by year young men gathering round him from all parts of the country still shared the influence which an honoured member of his first class, Dr. Horatius Bonar, has described as commencing a generation before in "that eventful year, when new life burst in upon our divinity hall, and a new theology as well as a new Christianity took possession of our divinity chair."

While this was his proper and professional work, and while, as we have seen, many other public labours were accumulated around it, his private life was spent with his wife and daughters in a channel of unbroken peace and love. When it overflowed its banks it was generally in such an enterprise as that territorial mission in the West Port of Edinburgh, not far from his own residence, which he commenced in 1845, on the principles which he had urged now for so many years. Its success was extraordinary. "It stands," says Dr. Hanna in 1852, "the only instance in which the depths of city ignorance and vice have been sounded to the very bottom; nor can the possibility of cleansing the foul basement story of our social edifice be doubted any longer." But while still occasionally throwing himself into such a work as this, Chalmers by this time felt, and cheerfully welcomed, the weight of advancing age. He moved about Edinburgh, a loved and venerated figure, by common consent the most illustrious of its citizens.

And as he grew in authority, he seemed still to grow in humility and kindness, in originality and in a certain humorous simplicity. How deeply these characteristics impressed strangers, even at a much earlier date, came out strikingly on the centenary of Dr. Chalmers's birth in a letter written by Mr. Gladstone to Sir Henry Moncreiff. The statesman had one year in early youth frequently met Dr. Chalmers in Edinburgh, and he now declared that what had then chiefly attracted his admiration was his "simplicity and detachment from the world," and the absolute impotence of lucre and lower motives "to lay hold of his great, stately, and heavenly mind." So, as his years wore on, they gave somewhat of the beauty of holiness even to his external appearance, which won those whom no other spell could bind.

In the last month of his life, the May of 1847, he travelled to London to give evidence before the House of Commons on the position of his Church and its principles as to reunion; and after doing so went down to Chelsea to see Thomas Carlyle and his celebrated wife. The former twice over records the meeting, and it is interesting to note how that venerable face at once struck from Carlyle's hand the sarcastic knife with which he has bitten into steel the portrait of almost every other contemporary. "I had not seen Chalmers for five-and-twenty years. It was a pathetic meeting. The good old man is grown white-headed, but is otherwise wonderfully little altered—grave, deliberate, very gentle in his deportment, but with plenty, too, of soft energy. . . . It is long since I have spoken to so good and really pious-hearted and beautiful an old man. . . . I believe there is not in all Scotland, or all Europe, any such Christian priest left."

He was not much longer left on earth in the priesthood of believers. A fortnight later he arrived in Edinburgh while the General Assembly was sitting, and all men looked forward to Monday, when he was to give in a report to the Free Church on one of its Christian schemes. But a Sabbath intervened. He went to church, and on his return wrote to his favourite sister, saying he could form no definite plans now on this side of the grave, but left her "with earnest prayers for the mercy and grace of a reconciled Father in heaven on one and all of us." Walking round his garden a little later, he was overheard to mutter, "O Father, my Heavenly Father!" That evening he was kind, cheerful, and happy almost beyond his wont, and as he retired he waved his hand to his family with the words, "A general good-night!"

Next morning there was silence in his room. His servant at last entered, and drew aside the curtains of the bed. Chalmers, half erect, had been for some hours dead—his head reclining gently on the pillow, and the expression of his countenance that of fixed and majestic repose. He was gone from the land for which he had done so much, and a few days later in the same city of Edinburgh "they buried him amid the tears of a nation and with more than kingly honours."

REGINALD HEBER

(1783–1826)

By

W. M. Colles, B.A.

Reginald Heber was born at Malpas, Cheshire, on 20th April 1783, and died at Trichinopoly on 23rd April 1826, two days after his forty-third birthday. He was the son of the Rev. Reginald Heber, co-Rector of Malpas and lord of the manor of Marston, Yorkshire, and of Mary, his second wife, daughter of the Rev. Dr. Allanson, Rector of Wrath. His father lived just long enough to rejoice in his youthful honours; his mother survived to lament his early death.

The Hebers were an old Yorkshire family. Their name is written, as it was long pronounced, Hayber, in some of the old papers of Bolton Abbey, and was derived, it is said, from a hill in Craven called Hayber or Hayburgh. But be this as it may, the rolls of the Heralds' College show that in Elizabeth's reign Reginald Heber of Marston was granted a certificate of the arms acknowledged to have been borne by the family. Reginald Heber therefore came of a good old English stock, and, which is of far more vital moment, of Christian parents.

Of his father, a simple country clergyman, we know little, but that little is enough to show that he was an earnest believer and a ripe scholar. His mother was,

REGINALD HEBER.

too, a woman of an earnest living piety, whose example influenced her son from his cradle to his grave. As an instance of his childish faith we are told that Reginald, when only three years old, was travelling with his parents across the wild and hilly country between Ripon and Craven, and that during the journey a storm broke of such extreme violence that his mother, who was greatly alarmed, proposed to leave the carriage and walk. Reginald, who was sitting on her knee, hereupon exclaimed, "Do not be afraid, mamma, God will take care of us!"

The beginnings of the Christian life must, in the case of Reginald Heber, be dated from his infancy. We are told that he could read the Bible with ease and fluency before he was five years old; so that it might be said of him as of Timothy, "From a child hast thou known the Holy Scriptures, which are able to make thee wise unto salvation." His singular sweetness of disposition, too, was such as gave rise to a saying among the servants of the family that "Master Reginald never was in a passion." Nature and art vied with each other in fascinating his opening mind. His youthful sketches, some of which are still treasured by his family, bear evident, if rough, indications of artistic ability. Entomology, zoology, ornithology in a practical form possessed attractions for him as for most boys.

Reginald, we are told, always showed great kindness of heart. In spite of his keen interest in animals of all kinds, he never could bear to keep them in confinement. Once, when his little sister had a squirrel given her, he persuaded her to set it at liberty, taking her to the tree up which it climbed that she might see the little creature's joy at being restored to freedom. A practical study in the habits of bulls, which he made some years later, was near having a tragic termination. Seeing a bull grazing in a field, he resolved to try the effect of sundry gesticulations with which an African traveller had lately narrated how he had successfully parried the attack of a wild ox. Instead of taking fright at the apparition, the bull charged him furiously, and Reginald only escaped by the fact that the animal, in the heat of pursuit, floundered into a pool of water and stuck fast in the mud.

His splendid memory, which lasted all his life, enabled him to recall anything he had once carefully read, so that it would be difficult to exaggerate, in his case, as in most, the value of early impressions. An extreme delicacy of constitution placed his life in jeopardy with almost every infantine ailment, and indeed he never was in really robust health, but was nevertheless always a diligent student.

"Reginald," his elder half-brother used to say, "does not read books, he devours them." When he was six years old, he had a severe attack of typhus fever, and when convalescent he asked as a special favour that he might be "permitted to learn the Latin grammar." Since he had translated *Phaedrus* into English verse before he was eight years old, Latin clearly possessed no terrors for him. He went to Whitchurch Grammar School, then under the care of Dr. Kent, in 1791, and remained there until 1796, when he became a pupil of the Rev. Dr. Bristow at Neasdon.

There are many stories of his school-days. Instead of joining in games, he took long walks with a book as his only companion. Laughed at by his schoolfellows, he won their hearts by telling them stories and anecdotes. His vivid imagination made him famous as a story-teller. Nor was his popularity diminished by his unswerving rectitude, which gave a tone to the school. He was generous also to a fault.

"Of his own money," says his widow, "he was so liberal that it was found necessary to sew the bank-notes given him for his half-year's pocket-money within the lining of his pockets, that he might not give them away in charity on the road."

The variety of his youthful studies was remarkable. Nothing seems to have come amiss to his omnivorous mind. For the exact sciences he had perhaps less taste than for any other branch of knowledge, but his letters to his life-long friend John Thornton show that he was nevertheless very anxious to be proficient in mathematics. Longinus, Æschylus, Homer, Guicciardini, Machiavelli, Locke, and his favourite Hooker are casually alluded to in his letters in 1799 and 1800, and this was the literature of a boy of sixteen.

Poetry had already claimed him for a disciple. Bonaparte's "Battle of the Nile" was the subject given at the time of the French invasion of Egypt for a school exercise, and Reginald, who was then fifteen, wrote his first piece, "The Prophecy of Ishmael," which, with all its crudities, contains indications of that promise that was afterwards so abundantly fulfilled. Spenser was already his favourite poet; and even in later life he seldom travelled without a volume of his school edition of the *Faërie Queene.*

It was in November 1800 that Heber was entered at Brasenose, Oxford, of which college his father had been, and his eldest brother was then, a Fellow. Privately educated, he had, of course, few acquaintances at Oxford; but his friendship with Hugh Cholmondeley, afterwards Dean of Chester, and his brother's friends, combined with his literary abilities and brilliant conversational powers, soon made him widely popular. There was even some danger that the social attractions of the University would endanger his future career, for we read of his sitting with the traditional wet towel round his forehead to make up for time lost in amusement. He formed, however, a habit of early rising, and of reading for a couple of hours before chapel, which stood him in good stead. In his first year he achieved distinction by gaining the University prize for Latin Verse by his "Carmen Saeculare," a bright poem on the commencement of the nineteenth century, which gave promise of future excellence. Heber was soon known as a "man of mark," and pointed out as certain of his Fellowship, a distinction upon which he had set his heart. In 1802 he was, according to his friend Sir C. E. Grey, "beyond all question or comparison the most distinguished student of his time."

It was towards the close of Heber's University career that "Palestine" was given out for the subject of an English poem as a prize extraordinary. He decided to compete. The spring of 1803 was largely devoted to its composition, which was hindered by a violent attack of influenza. Sir Walter Scott happened to visit Oxford at this time, and at a breakfast party, at which Heber was one of the guests, the poem was mentioned, and, at Sir Walter's cordial entreaty, produced and read. Sir Walter, who himself told the story to Heber's widow, praised the piece, but remarked, "You have omitted one striking circumstance in your account of the building of the temple, that no tools were used in its construction." Reginald at once acted upon the suggestion, and improvised off-hand the striking lines :—

No hammer fell, no ponderous axes swung,
Like some tall palm the mystic fabric sprung,
Majestic silence——

It was a memorable day in his life when he mounted the rostrum to recite the already famous poem. He had so far overcome his natural timidity that his recitation was a striking success, and the poem was received with a burst of admiration. His father, then in his seventy-fifth year, had come up to Oxford for the occasion, and we can well believe the pride which he must have felt in his son's success. But there was no foundation for the statement that the excitement had shortened his life, or, as the story runs in some of the books, that he died at Oxford. He had long been in failing health, and when eight months later he fell asleep at Malpas, the blow was mercifully tempered by the monitions which had preceded it.

Heber graduated in 1804, and in November of that year he was elected a Fellow of All Souls. In the following year his English essay on the "Sense of Honour" was easily successful in taking the University Bachelor's Prize.

His tour, in company with his friend John Thornton, through such parts of Europe as were then accessible was a great event in those days. It included Norway and Sweden, Russia, the Crimea, the country of the Don Cossacks, Poland, Hungary, etc. Some idea of the contemporary value of the journal of his journeyings may be gathered from the fact that Dr. Clarke gladly availed himself of the leave given him to extract notes for his famous *Travels.* These not only greatly enrich the latter book, but have been classed with the labours of Burckhardt, the celebrated Syrian traveller. His tour also bore fruit in a *History of the Cossacks*, upon which he was engaged for a considerable time, which, although never completed, and not published until after his death, was acknowledged to be a work of no ordinary value.

Upon his return to England, Heber went into residence at All Souls, and entered solemnly upon preparation for holy orders. We are given a glimpse of his earnest convictions in a letter written at this time to his friend John Thornton, congratulating him upon his approaching marriage.

"I trust," he says, "that amid your feelings of happiness, feelings of gratitude will always keep a place, united with a sense of your total dependence on the Hand which has given so largely to you, and which may, even now, in a moment deprive you of all you value most. . . . The more pain the idea gives, the more reason we have to examine and amend our hearts, lest we impose a necessity on Divine mercy to take away from His thoughtless children the blessings they are perverting to their own destruction."

It was in the summer of 1807 that Heber was ordained, and was immediately presented by his elder half-brother Richard to the family living of Hodnet, Salop. He settled down at once to the duties of his new position. To his parishioners he was from the first a "guide, philosopher, and friend," not only accessible at all times, but seeking them out and studying their wants and interests with unselfish devotion.

His parochial work was scarcely interrupted by his marriage, in April 1809, with Amelia, the youngest daughter of Dr. Shipley, Dean of St. Asaph. Perhaps he was never happier than while he was living in his rural rectory, "seeing God's blessings spring out of his mother earth, and eating his own bread in peace and privacy." In order to devote himself to his parish work, he had now withdrawn almost entirely from those pleasures of intellectual companionship which were open to him. He started a school in his village, and it is related as an instance of his influence that a notorious character, who, after a life of drunkenness and depravity, had settled down into an irreligious old age, sent his only companion, a little grandson, to the rector's school. Some one expressed surprise at this, and the old man replied, "Why not? Do you think I wish Philip to be as bad as myself? I am black enough, God knows." It is pleasant to know that at the old man's death-bed he listened to his pastor's ministrations with intense anxiety, and died, it is believed, in peace. Among Heber's letters, too, are those addressed to a Roman Catholic parishioner, and another who was a victim to the vice of drunkenness, which are models of style and kindly tact, while they show us a faithful pastor among his flock.

In his charities Heber was prodigal; many a good deed done by him in secret only came to light when he had been removed far away, and but for that removal would probably have been for ever hid. Such was his delicate attention towards those of a humble rank in life, that he would never keep poor persons waiting. He was so liberal that he often forgave his just dues to an extent which seriously crippled his own resources. And he did all this without ostentation, and in a spirit of the deepest humility.

He was very anxious to teach his parishioners by example as well as by precept. One Sunday morning, when he was riding to preach at Marston, his horse cast a shoe. Seeing the village blacksmith standing at the door of his forge, he requested him to replace it. The man immediately set about blowing at the embers of his Saturday night's fire, on seeing which the rector said, "On second thoughts, John, it does not signify; I can walk my mare; it will not lame her, and I do not like to disturb your day of rest.'

Here, again, is a story which illustrates the sweet simplicity of his mind. A child by her mother's request had been repeating her lesson to him; after listening to the little girl, he gradually began to talk to her on the subject it related to; and when she was asked how she liked saying her lesson to Mr. Reginald Heber, she answered, "Oh! very much, and he told me a great many things, but I do not think he knows much more than I do."

In the midst of his parish work Heber found his chief recreation in the amenities of letters. The welcome with which "Palestine" was received was renewed when it was set to music by Dr. Crotch. Meanwhile his "Lines on the present War" had appeared under the title "Europe" in 1809. The opening stanza was written at Dresden during a sleepless night, when he

> heard the ceaseless jar,
> The rattling wagons, and the wheels of war;
> The sounding lash, the march's mingled hum,
> And lost and heard by fits the languid drum.

The piece, though not equal to "Palestine," has many passages of extreme beauty. It was at this time, too, that he became a contributor to the *Quarterly Review*, then first established as a rival to the *Edinburgh*. His review of some obscure translations of Pindar, which appeared in 1811, was designed to introduce some of those exquisite renderings of his own which were afterwards published with other poems.

But more interesting far than these efforts are the hymns which have permanently enriched our national psalmody. These were, it is interesting to know, mainly due to Heber's desire to improve the services at his parish church in this respect. In 1809 we find him inquiring for, amongst others, a copy of Cowper's Olney Hymns with the music. But he seems to have failed to meet with any collection which pleased him, and he entertained strong objections to the garbled versions of the psalms then in use. The first efforts of his own sacred muse appeared in the *Christian Remembrancer* for 1811-12, with a modest preface, in which he compared the advantages of a series appropriate to the Sundays and holy days throughout the year, and connected in some degree with their particular collects and gospels. It is almost superfluous to dwell upon the hallowed charms of many of these spiritual songs, and their peculiar appropriateness to time and season. Those grand Advent hymns, "Hosanna to the living Lord" and "The Lord will come, the earth shall quake," are not unworthy memorials of the Christian triumph. There is a really martial ring of victory in the hymn for St. Stephen's day, which is almost startling as a commemoration of the death of the proto-martyr. The popular version, it may be added, differs from the original, which we give here as printed from his MS.:—

The Son of God is gone to war,
  A kingly crown to gain,
His blood-red banner streams afar,
  Who follows in His train?
Who best can drink His cup of woe,
  Triumphant over pain?
Who boldest bears His cross below?
  He follows in His train.

The Martyr first, whose eagle eye
  Could pierce beyond the grave,
Who saw his Master in the sky,
  And called on Him to save;
Like Him, with pardon on his tongue
  In midst of mortal pain,
He prayed for them that did the wrong.
  Who follows in his train?

A glorious band, the chosen few,
  On whom the Spirit came,

Twelve valiant saints, the truth they knew,
And braved the cross and flame ;
They met the tyrant's brandished steel,
The lion's gory mane,
They bow'd their necks the death to feel.
Who follows in their train ?

A noble army, men and boys,
The matron and the maid,
Around their Saviour's throne rejoice,
In robes of light arrayed.
They climbed the dizzy steep of heaven,
Through peril, toil, and pain—
O God ! to us may grace be given
To follow in their train !

And there is a reverent joyousness in his Epiphany hymn—

Brightest and best of the sons of the morning !
Dawn on our darkness and lend us thine aid !

which reaches its zenith in the grand truth that it is not the gift but the giver that is acceptable—

Richer by far is the heart's adoration ;
Dearer to God are the prayers of the poor.

Mark the lovely imagery in the hymn for the first Sunday after Epiphany—

By cool Siloam's shady rill
How sweet the lily grows !

His bright Trinity hymn again—" Holy, Holy, Holy, Lord God Almighty," has a soul-stirring ring of praise ; and many a broken-hearted mourner has been comforted by his funeral hymn, which breathes the very spirit of Christian resignation :—

Thou art gone to the grave ! but we will not deplore thee,
Though sorrows and darkness encompass the tomb ;
Thy Saviour has passed through its portal before thee,
And the lamp of His love is thy guide through the gloom !

Thou art gone to the grave! we no longer behold thee,
  Nor tread the rough parts of the world by thy side;
But the wide arms of mercy are spread to enfold thee,
  And sinners may die, for the Sinless has died.

Thou art gone to the grave! and its mansion forsaking,
  Perchance thy weak spirit in fear lingered long;
But the mild rays of Paradise beamed on thy waking,
  And the sound which thou heardst was the Seraphim's song.

Thou art gone to the grave! but we will not deplore thee,
  Whose God was thy ransom, thy guardian and guide;
He gave thee, He took thee, and He will restore thee,
  And death has no sting, for the Saviour has died!

This hymn possesses, moreover, a sad meaning, since it was written after the death, on Christmas Eve 1818, of his first child, then only a few months old. This sad bereavement was so keenly felt by Heber that for months he never heard the child's name mentioned without tears.

It is of curious interest to know that the sweetest of all Heber's hymns, "From Greenland's icy mountains," the first-fruits of that missionary zeal which was afterwards to bear such rich fruit, was composed impromptu at Wrexham, North Wales, in 1819, on the occasion of a visit to his father-in-law, the Dean of St. Asaph, who preached next day in support of missionary operations in the East. It is not generally known that the original MS. of this poem was found on the printer's file at Wrexham by the late Dr. Raffles of Liverpool many years afterwards.

Before publishing his hymns, Heber consulted Dr. Howley, then Bishop of London, as to their receiving the "sanction of the Archbishop of Canterbury for general use in churches." Dr. Howley, however, although writing in the kindest terms and making valuable hints and suggestions, did not think it advisable for the hymns to be officially patronised, but advised him to persevere in his undertaking and to publish the hymns on their merits. The services of, amongst others, Sir Walter Scott and Robert Southey, then Poet Laureate, were enlisted, and Heber wrote to the Rev. H. H. Milman, whose beautiful poem, the *Siege of Jerusalem*, he had reviewed with keen appreciation for the *Quarterly* in 1816, and who gladly contributed many valuable and beautiful pieces. The collected publication was, however, delayed, and the volume did not appear until after Heber's decease. Heber was not musical, but he had a good ear, and many of his hymns were composed to Welsh and Scotch airs, which he had heard and admired, and this circumstance accounts for the exquisite charm of their melody.

The small volume of collected poems which was published in 1812 had become widely popular, but with the exception of a few sweet trifles, of which he wrote some while on his travels in India, he had by this time withdrawn altogether from these compositions. His "Morte d'Arthur," which was written in 1812, was never finished, and is one of the least satisfactory of his poetical attempts. The unfinished "Masque of Gwendolen," which is taken from Chaucer's "Wife of Bath's Tale," is also perhaps deficient in ease and lightness. As examples of his versatility, we have his poetic rendering of the Oriental stories of Il Bondocani and Blue Beard, as well as some passages of the "Shah Nameh of Ferdusi" and the "Moallakah of Hareth"; but other duties diverted his mind from these graceful recreations, and he voluntarily renounced a poet's highest meed and praise.

But chief, perhaps, amongst the literary labours of his life was a Dictionary of the Bible, designed to "supply the defects of Calmet." This, however, although continued down to his early death, was never completed. So from "grave to gay, from lively to severe," we may range at will over Heber's literary work, and find reflected in it the natural versatility of his mind.

The story of Heber's last years in England is more than a mere record of parish work and intellectual recreation. It was impossible that a man of such rare promise should be confined to labouring, however usefully, only within the limits of a little country parish; although had this been his portion we do not doubt that he would have cheerfully acquiesced in the sphere allotted to him by the good providence of God, in the same spirit of devout thankfulness that he embraced those wider opportunities which were now thrown open to him. His appointment as Bampton Lecturer in 1814 gave him an opportunity of establishing his reputation as a theologian. Different views were, and, of course, always will be, entertained of his treatment of the subject he selected for his sermons, "The Divinity, Personality, and Office of the Holy Spirit," but their critical value as an exposure of the Arian, Sabellian. Pelagian, and Socinian systems has never been disputed,

The lectures enabled Heber to do more justice to his undoubted abilities than the addresses suitable to his village congregation, which were plain statements of the doctrines of revelation drawn simply from Holy Writ.

Heber had, in 1814, declined the offer of a prebend of Durham in exchange for Hodnet, but in 1817 he accepted a stall in St. Asaph Cathedral offered him by Dr. Luxmore. He generally performed the frequent journeys he had to make into Wales on horseback, beguiling the time the while by composing light fugitive pieces. Some of his hymns, too, were first composed on these occasions and committed to memory to be written down afterwards.

A vacancy occurred in the Preachership of Lincoln's Inn in 1819, and Heber became a candidate, but Dr. Lloyd, who was strongly supported by Peel, was elected. This was a great disappointment, although he bravely laughs it off, saying that his "talents in the eloquential line are not likely to be displayed at Lincoln's Inn."

An offer of the editorship of a collected edition of Jeremy Taylor's works which was made him about this time was too tempting to be refused. Heber had long been an ardent admirer of the Bishop's character, with which, indeed, his own had much in common. In his poetical temperament, hatred of intolerance, simplicity, practical piety, and vivid faith he was a not unworthy disciple of the great divine. The *Life* which he wrote for this edition is one of the most pleasing biographies in our language, and the author's style is perhaps seen at its best in its pages.

The crisis through which the country was now passing naturally did not fail to impress Heber's mind even in his country rectory. In November 1816 he wrote to a friend suggesting a pamphlet on "Popular Discontent," designed to remove prevalent misunderstandings. It is almost startling nowadays to find him advocating nearly ninety years ago "a parænesis to the gentry of England to exert themselves in recovering their lost popularity; pointing out the necessity in particular of relaxing the game laws, of residence on their property, and improving the condition of the cottagers." And if any further proof of his prescient acumen were required, we have his trenchant condemnation of impure literature, which was then, as now, being carefully disseminated throughout the country, and his far-seeing suggestion that "an abridgment of some historical books, of the 'Lives of Admirals,' Southey's *Nelson*, Hume's *History*, etc., would be of advantage if a society could be instituted to print them in numbers so cheap as to make it more worth the while of the hawkers to sell them than Paine's *Age of Reason*."

Heber's election as Preacher at Lincoln's Inn in 1822 was the more gratifying from his former disappointment, and from the eminence of his unsuccessful competitor, Dr. Maltby. His Lincoln's Inn sermons were remarkable for high finish and elaborate erudition, and show that their gifted author was admirably fitted for this distinguished appointment. The society which welcomed him in London was very congenial to his tastes, numbering as it did many old college friends, from whom he had been separated for many years. He also embraced the opportunity of taking a more active share in Christian effort outside his own immediate sphere. We find him, for instance, defending the Bible Society from ill-timed attacks, and advancing the claims of other great Christian societies with voice and pen. As a controversialist, too, he always preserved the greatest respect towards those who differed from him.

We now stand at the parting of the ways in Heber's life. Little by little his mind had been attracted to those vast fields of Christian work which lay waiting for the labourers in heathen countries. The *Life of Henry Martyn* was one of his favourite books. Martyn's heroic labours, undaunted zeal, and martyr's death had then lately kindled a profound missionary enthusiasm. It is of rare interest to read how Heber and his wife, in their peaceful country rectory, long before they had any expectation of following in his footsteps, traced

Martyn's Eastern journeyings, and especially those through the almost unknown Indian Empire. Heber, we know, believed that many of the difficulties which Martyn encountered so nobly might be lessened, if not avoided, if opposition were disarmed at home. He had followed with the keenest anxiety the progress of Christianity in the East, and the appointment of Dr. Middleton to the episcopal see of Calcutta excited his highest hopes of increased Christian activity. It was because he hoped that the cause would thus be furthered that he had advocated the union of the Society for the Propagation of the Gospel and the Church Missionary Society, a scheme which he always cherished. These thoughts were still largely in his mind when the unexpected death of Dr. Middleton placed the appointment of his successor in the hands of the Right Honourable C. W. Williams Wynn, then President of the Board of Commissioners for the Affairs of India.

The nine years during which Bishop Middleton had laboured in that vast field had seen great changes. Martyn durst not even introduce into his schools his version of the parables, and found himself everywhere regarded with suspicion. But now these difficulties were greatly lessened ; and there was a much wider knowledge of those mystic cults which made up the religion of the Hindus. Caste still remained, as it does to-day, the great obstacle to the conversion of the East, but the missionary schools were even then overcoming these prejudices. Children of different castes in many settlements mixed freely together. The spirit of piety which had influenced Dr. Middleton was combined with a practical wisdom that had enabled him to overcome many of those difficulties which threatened the progress of Christian effort, and had more than justified the appointment of a bishop, which had been considered by many as an experiment threatening a revolution; but the opposition on this and other grounds was still strong enough to prevent the episcopal authority being extended. The privilege of ordaining native Christians, for instance, was altogether withheld from Dr. Middleton, although both teaching and experience had established the truth that it was vain to expect that a knowledge of Christianity could be diffused on any great scale over such a country as India without a native ministry. There were still grievous dissensions, which caused the profoundest anxiety and greatly added to the cares of the vast diocese.

When therefore, in December 1822, Heber received an intimation that the appointment was in his offer, he was under no illusions as to its attractions. Yet he did not hesitate to express what great pleasure it would give him, if the way were made plain, to undertake the work. At the same time he strongly recommended the propriety of appointing some one of the archdeacons or chaplains already in India; and suggested that the unwieldy diocese should be divided into three, the Bishop of Calcutta to be the primate. Mr. Wynn pressed him to accept the nomination in the most complimentary terms; but Heber, with the greatest reluctance, declined the offer in consideration of the advanced age of his mother and the probable effects of the climate upon his own little daughter. But his conscience moved him to withdraw his refusal, and after much searching of heart and earnest prayer to God for guidance, he "cheerfully and gratefully" accepted it.

His letters to his wife, who was away from home at this time, reflect the workings of his mind at this momentous time, and show us with what holy zeal he was filled. The decision once made, he was deaf to the arguments of friends who did their utmost to shake his resolution. One of them, for instance, even went so far as to declare, "Yours is the very quixotism of religion; I suppose you are going in search of the lost ten tribes of Israel." To which he calmly replied, "I think I can be of use among the natives; such will at least be my earnest endeavour, and I am very zealous in the cause; and if I am permitted to rescue one miserable Brahmin from his wretched superstition I shall think myself amply rewarded for the sacrifice." He had the assurance of a higher approval than that of any earthly adviser. Thus he says, "In making this decision, I hope and believe that I have been guided by conscientious feelings. I can at least most truly say that I have prayed to God most heartily to show me the path of duty and to give me grace to follow it; and the tranquillity of mind which I now feel (only different from that which I experienced after having declined it) induces me to hope that I have His blessing and approbation."

The preparations for his long voyage were actively pushed forward. Very touching were his leave-takings. "I often," he declares, "feel very heart-sick when I recollect the sacrifices I must make of friends such as few, very few, have been blest with"; but he took comfort in the beautiful thought that "prayer can traverse sea and land." The high esteem in which he was held at home was shown by the alacrity with which the University of Oxford conferred upon him the degrees of B.D. and D.D., while his college had his portrait painted for their hall. His departure was hurried by the sudden death of Dr. Loring, Archdeacon of Calcutta. Next, perhaps, to his taking leave of his beloved mother he felt most keenly his final farewell of his beloved Hodnet, where he had "hung a thought on every thorn." He had laboured here for sixteen years, and here his mother and sister still lived. The place was to him full of tender associations, and the depth of his feelings found touching expression in his last sermon in the village church. He was deeply touched by the presentation of a piece of plate by his parishioners, largely subscribed for in pence, but more by the tears and prayers with which his homely parishioners wished him farewell. On 22nd April 1823, when passing over the high ground near Newport, he turned round to take the last view of that endeared spot, and, overcome with emotion, prayed that God would bless the people, exclaiming with prophetic prescience, "I shall never again see my Hodnet."

Heber was consecrated on 1st June, and on the 8th he preached at St. Paul's for the benefit of the charity school. On the 16th he went down the Thames in the Ramsgate steam-packet, and embarked on board the *Sir Thomas Grenville*, then lying at Gravesend ready to sail. Contrary winds prevented them from getting beyond the Downs until 18th June, when they put to sea, and Heber bade farewell to his native country for ever.

After a tedious voyage, largely spent in studying Hindustani, Heber reached India on 3rd October 1823, when the *Sir Thomas Grenville* anchored in Saugor roads. Three days later the good ship reached Diamond Harbour, where the East India Company had their first settlement, and Heber, accompanied by his wife and daughter, went up the Ganges in the Government yacht. At Calcutta, where he was warmly welcomed by the Governor, Lord Amherst, he found immense arrears of business awaiting him, much of it of a most perplexing and anxious nature. But with characteristic energy—an energy which he never allowed the enervating influences of the climate to lessen—he applied himself to his new duties. No one who reads his *Journals* or his widow's exhaustive *Life* can help being struck with the tact and discernment which he showed in dealing with nice matters affecting his episcopal authority, when an arrogant ecclesiastic would have widened, not narrowed, the existing breaches and endangered the whole Christian cause. A good illustration of the kindly tact with which he healed dissensions is shown in his letters to Archdeacon Barnes and the Rev. Mr. Davis, who objected to the archdeacon occupying his pulpit at Bombay. Nothing could have been more wise than his appeal to Mr. Davis no longer to offer to the heathen the "spectacle of a divided clergy." And it is gratifying to know that the advice was followed, and that both ministers united cordially in the common cause of Christianity.

Not only did Heber identify himself heart and soul with the needs of his vast diocese, which extended at this time over the whole of India, embracing likewise Ceylon, the Mauritius, and Australasia, but he was indefatigable in his efforts to relieve by his own exertions the pressure put upon the other ministers of the English Church in Bengal owing to their deficient numbers. All agencies that made for good found him at all times ready and willing to give them his ungrudging help. We see him preaching more frequently even than in England, helping in school work and administration (the poor little children seated on the ground writing in sand, or on "palmyra leaves," exciting his profound compassion), and instant in season and out of season in his Master's service. "Often," his widow tells, "have I earnestly requested him to spare himself, when, on descending from the pulpit, I have sometimes seen him almost unable to speak from exhaustion; or when, after a few hours' rest at night, he would rise at four the next morning, to attend a meeting or visit a school, and then pass the whole day in mental labour, without allowing himself the hour's mid-day sleep in which the most active generally indulge."

He had only been a few months in the country before the lamentable scarcity of chaplains in Ceylon led to his admitting into holy orders Christian David, a pious native schoolmaster, who had as a boy been a pupil of Schwartz.

He had already made a few journeys to towns within reach of Calcutta, and had for a time moved to Tityghur, near Barrackpoor, where his wife was safely delivered of a little girl; but he was not able to bring the affairs of his diocese in and around Calcutta into a sufficiently manageable condition to make arrangements for his first visitation of the Upper Provinces until the spring was far advanced. He decided to travel by water, although more tedious than by road, in order to escape the rains, when Bengal was at its worst. We have in the *Narrative* of his journeys, much of which was written by the Bishop in the form of letters to his wife, a most faithful and graphic account of his travels. The sensation created when the volumes first appeared in 1827 can in these days of redundant literature hardly be credited. Even Lord Jeffrey said of it, "Independently of its moral attraction, we are induced to think it the most instructive and important publication that has ever been given to the world on the actual state and condition of our Indian Empire," and it came as a revelation of a new world to hundreds of readers.

Much, of course, of the detail of his experiences is now out of date. Eighty years have witnessed changes in India more sweeping even than those in our own country. But the human interest of these pages can never pall. As we follow their writer in his eleven months' journeyings through the Upper Provinces—journeyings full of privation, adventure, and danger, as well as the first impressions of one who possessed the eye of the painter and the pen of the poet—we see reflected as in a mirror his lofty purity of purpose and burning zeal for the spread of the good tidings of salvation among the myriads of heathens.

Heber now realised his own beautiful idea that they "call us to deliver their land from error's chain." He writes as if speaking his thoughts aloud. The horrors of suttee thrilled him to the core; and very interesting is it to find him, later, exchanging his views upon this frightful custom with the venerable Carey and Marshman of the Baptist Mission.

The terrible climate and his indefatigable exertions told slowly but surely upon Heber's health. He always suffered much from the heat, although he discarded episcopal dress, and travelled in a broad-brimmed white pith hat, and always wore, and urged his clergy to wear, white trousers. At Lucknow he was seized with an attack of cholera, and at Delhi with fever, from both of which, although without medical assistance, he mercifully recovered. The "iron clime" of Guzerat, too, had shaken his constitution. When he reached Bombay, he looked harassed and worn, and was much thinner. His unswerving assiduity in his work would have had injurious effects in any country, but in India these could hardly be exaggerated. Yet such was his conception of his duty that he never "spared himself," but to the last fought against lassitude.

When he reached Trichinopoly, where the mission founded by Schwartz in 1762 was in a poor and neglected state, on 1st April 1826, his forty-third birthday, he was much jaded and worn with travel in the intense heat. On the next day, however, he preached at St. John's Church in the morning, and held a confirmation in the evening, and on the 3rd rode to Schwartz's church and held another confirmation. On his return home he endorsed his "Address on Confirmation," according to his custom, "Trichinopoly, 3rd April 1826." It was his last act. Immediately afterwards he went to the large bath, which was in a building a few doors from his house, and, as he had done with benefit on the two preceding mornings, plunged in. Half an hour later his native servant, alarmed at his lengthened stay, found his lifeless body in the water. All attempts at resuscitation proved vain. The "spirit had returned to the God who gave it."

The memory of that national bereavement for many years remained fresh. East and West met in mourning over Heber's grave. The tribute of respect and reverence and love was universal, and it took the remarkable form of realising at once many of those projects which he had so much at heart.

In the cathedral at Calcutta, and in St. George's Church, Madras, masterpieces by Chantrey were erected to his memory, and we have his monument at St. Paul's. Some years ago a movement to restore the bath at Trichinopoly was seconded by the Government, and the bath was protected by an iron railing. Mr. Grant Duff also directed the following inscription, drawn up by the Bishop of Madras, to be carved on a slab erected on the side wall:—"In memory of the devoted, accomplished, beloved, and universally honoured servant of God, Reginald Heber, third Bishop of Calcutta, and one of India's truest and most loving benefactors, this stone was erected in the year 1882, at the expense of Government, on the margin of the bath in which he was drowned while bathing, 3rd April 1826. His body was laid under the Chancel of the Church of St. John, Trichinopoly, in the hope of the Resurrection of the just to Eternal Life through Jesus Christ."

RICHARD WHATELY.

RICHARD WHATELY

(1787–1863)

By
T. Hamilton, D.D.

On Candlemas Day, 1787, a child was born in Cavendish Square, London, to the Rev. Joseph Whately, D.D., Vicar of Widford, which did not seem likely to live long, much less to play any great part in the world. The infant seemed as puny and feeble as it was small. As it grew, there was no improvement, and people half pityingly, half contemptuously, said that the boy would never be of any use to anybody. So unpromisingly began the life of Richard Whately, afterwards Archbishop of Dublin.

He came of a stock not a few members of which had risen to more or less eminence. There was William, of Puritan times, "the painful preacher of Banbury," on whose tomb stands the quaint but significant epitaph :—

It's William Whately that here lies,
Who swam to 's tomb in his people's eyes.

Then, last century, there was Thomas, private secretary to George Grenville, and afterwards "Keeper of His Majesty's Private Roads and Guide to the Royal Person in all Progresses." Another Thomas was author of several medical works which attained note in their day.

Richard by and by began to give evidence that he was no degenerate scion of this Whately tree. He learned to read and write at an unusually early age. But his great passion was for arithmetic. At six he astonished an old gentleman who lived near his father's house by telling him with perfect accuracy how many minutes old he was. Treating of this period of his life, he afterwards wrote, "I was engaged either in calculation or in castle-building, which I was also very fond of, morning, noon and night, and was so absorbed as to run against people in the street, with all the other accidents of absent people." Strange to say, his talent for figures disappeared as remarkably as it had come, and when he was sent to school he was found to be such a dunce at arithmetic, that it was with great difficulty he was taught its ordinary processes.

At nine Whately was sent to the school of a Mr. Phillips, near Bristol, whom he afterwards described as having a wonderful influence over his boys, though neither an able man nor skilful in imparting knowledge.

In 1805 Whately entered Oriel College, Oxford, where, if his peculiarities provoked comment and sometimes occasioned ridicule, his ability soon commanded respect. He became known among the students as "The White Bear," from his blunt, gruff manner, combined with a habit which he had of attiring himself in a white coat and a white hat, and being usually attended by a huge white dog. For the unwritten laws which regulated university life he cared little. But to the work of the college he applied himself with unremitting assiduity. He was usually at his books by five in the morning. After spending a couple of hours at them he would sally out for a country walk, from which he would be seen returning fresh and in exuberant spirits as the late risers hurried from their rooms to eight o'clock chapel.

His tutor in Oriel was Dr. Copleston, afterwards Bishop of Llandaff. A strong attachment sprang up between the two, which only death severed. Whately always averred that he owed more to Copleston than to any other man. The young undergraduate was as original in his methods of work as in other things. When hard pressed for time he had, for example, a unique recipe for making two days out of one. Rising at 3 A.M., he would conclude his first day at noon, having thus enjoyed a good working day nine hours in length; he then went to bed in a darkened room, and slept till 2 or 3 o'clock, when he rose again and set to work once more, ending his second day at 10 P.M., when he retired to rest. For all working purposes he said that he thus found his time doubled. Most constitutions, however, instead of finding an advantage in this method of lengthening the days, would soon discover that it was an effectual mode of shortening them. Even Whately could not have stood it often or long. That his work was done with a continual sense of the great Taskmaster's eye is proved by the motto which he inscribed on the title-page of a "Commonplace Book" which he began keeping at an early stage of his college career—"Let the words of my mouth and the meditations of my heart be acceptable in Thy sight, O Lord, my Strength and my Redeemer!"

At his degree examination Whately took a double second, and in 1811 he was elected a fellow of his college.

Oriel common-room was about this period the daily meeting-place of as remarkable a group of men as any college ever brought together. Among them, in addition to Whately, were Arnold, Copleston, Keble, John Henry Newman, and Pusey. It would be out of place to trace here the interaction of these master-minds on each other. Curiously enough, Newman declares that he owed Whately a great deal. "While I was still awkward and timid," he says, "he took me by the hand and acted the part to me of a gentle and encouraging instructor. He, emphatically, opened my mind and taught me to think and to use my reason." After drifting asunder farther and farther, the two former fellow-students came, in the lapse of time, to be near neighbours again in Dublin, the one being in the Palace, and the other in the Roman Catholic University in Stephen's Green; but the old college intercourse was never renewed.

Whately now became one of the tutors of Oriel, and a most admirable tutor he made. Amongst his first pupils was Nassau William Senior, who, to his great mortification, had been plucked at the examination for his degree. After reading a while under Whately, he took a first-class. Tutor and pupil became fast friends, and constantly corresponded till the death of the former. Whately's style of lecturing was not, indeed, overburdened with dignity. Another of his pupils, afterwards Bishop Hinds, tells us: "His apartment was a small one, and the little room in it much reduced by an enormous sofa, on which I found him stretched at length, with a pipe in his mouth, the atmosphere becoming denser and denser as he puffed." But, no matter what his surroundings or mode of work, he succeeded in drawing out of his scholars all that was in them worth the process. In truth he was a born teacher, and all his life was never happier than when exercising the art.

In 1825 Whately was appointed Principal of St. Alban's Hall, Oxford. He found the place much disorganised, the discipline lax, and the reputation of the

Hall in every respect low. Before long, in his vigorous hands, everything assumed a different aspect.

It was about this time that he wrote some of his best-known works, among others the *Logic*, which was first published in the *Encyclopædia Metropolitana*, his *Rhetoric*, the Bampton Lectures on *The Use and Abuse of Party Feeling in Religion*, his essays on *Some of the Peculiarities of the Christian Religion*, and on *Some of the Difficulties in the Writings of St. Paul*, and that curious little volume entitled *Historic Doubts regarding Napoleon Buonaparte.*

By his treatise on Logic, as Professor Seth wrote, " which gave a great impetus to the study, not only in Oxford but throughout Great Britain, Whately has been known to after generations of students. . . . Whately swept away the webs of scholasticism from the subject, and raised the study to a new level."

His *Historic Doubts*, which he published under the odd *nom de plume* of " Konx Ompax," is the more interesting from some modern developments of criticism. It had for its object to show that it is as possible to give a philosophic denial to the most notable and best-authenticated facts of history as to the statements of Revelation. The author most ingeniously shows that the history of Buonaparte is full of apparent contradictions and absurdities. One example of his method of procedure may suffice. He says: " The principal Parisian journal, the *Moniteur*, in the number published on the very day in the year 1814 on which the allied armies are said to have entered Paris as conquerors, makes no mention of any such event, nor alludes at all to any military transactions, but is entirely occupied with criticisms on some theatrical performances. Now this may be considered as equivalent to a positive contradiction of the received accounts."

In 1814 Whately had been ordained deacon. His first sermon was preached at Knowle in Warwickshire, the occasion being made memorable to himself by the fact that, with his usual absence of mind, he went to church without noting down his text, and had at the last moment to summon the clerk to his aid before he could proceed with his discourse. It might have been supposed that his natural shyness would have made preaching painful to him. It was not so, however. To a friend who asked him whether he was not very nervous on the occasion of his first effort in the pulpit, he made the excellent reply: "I dared not be. To think of myself at such a time would be in my eyes not only a weakness, but a sin."

In 1822 he was presented to the living of Halesworth in Suffolk. As might be expected, he threw the same heart and energy into his work here as made his teaching in Oxford so successful. He had been married the previous year to Miss Elizabeth Pope, daughter of William Pope, of Hillingdon, Middlesex, a lady who proved a true yoke-fellow to him all her life, and who especially rendered him the most essential help in the management of his parish. In Halesworth he delivered, as a series of week-day addresses, his lectures on *Scripture Revelations concerning a Future State*. To this fascinating subject he had given much attention, and on it, as usual, he formed very independent views. In his country parish he led a quietly busy life. His pulpit style was that for which he argues so strenuously in his *Rhetoric*, and which he was never weary of inculcating on clergymen, a natural style, without straining the vocal organs to their hurt, and to the defeat of the end aimed at. On one occasion he put this favourite view of his more pointedly than pleasantly to a clerical friend who had officiated in his hearing and insisted on having his opinion as to his rendering of the service. "Well," said Whately, "if you really wish to know what I think of your reading, I should say there are only two parts of the service you read well, and these you read unexceptionably."

"And what are those?" said his friend.

"They are 'Here endeth the first lesson,' and 'Here endeth the second lesson,'" he replied.

"What do you mean, Whately?" was the astonished parson's rejoinder.

"I mean," said Whately, "that these parts you read in your own natural voice and manner, which are very good; the rest is all artificial and assumed."

The fearless, straightforward character of his ministrations at Halesworth may be gathered from an anecdote which he used to tell. "I remember one of my parishioners," he said, "telling me that he thought a person should not go to church to be made uncomfortable. I replied that I thought so too; but whether it should be the sermons or the man's life that should be altered, so as to avoid the discomfort, must depend on whether the doctrine was right or wrong."

In September 1831, Earl Grey offered Whately the archbishopric of Dublin, then vacant by the death of Dr. Magee, author of *Discourses and Dissertations on the Scriptural Doctrines of Atonement and Sacrifice.* The mode in which the news of his election was received was characteristic. Whately was on a visit to Arnold at Rugby when the letter containing the offer was put into his hands at the breakfast table. After glancing at the contents of the missive, he quietly put it into his pocket and continued his breakfast, talking the while of indifferent subjects as if nothing unusual had happened. When they rose from table he told Arnold, and then a visitor having arrived, Whately entered into conversation with him and asked him out to see the feats of his climbing dog, of which he was singularly proud.

The position of Archbishop of Dublin, high though it was, was surrounded at that time by perils and difficulties which might well have made the bravest pause before accepting it. Ireland was passing through an acute phase of her too usual excited and turbulent condition. O'Connell was in the full height of the popularity to which his efforts for Roman Catholic Emancipation, granted two years before, had raised him. The chronic struggle between Government and the populace was raging fiercely. "I never," wrote a correspondent of Lord Cloncurry in the year in which Whately received his appointment, "witnessed anything so turbulent and angry as the populace were in Dublin this day—not even in the height of '98." Then the Established Church, of which Whately was to be one of the heads, was in dire straits. The tithe war was at its height, and in connection with it scenes of the most appalling violence were being enacted. To add to the sad confusion, a new system of national education was in the act of being launched, which was destined to divide Protestantism itself into two hostile camps. It spoke much for the reputation which Whately had acquired, that, at such a crisis in the affairs of the country, Earl Grey should send him to Dublin, especially when it is remembered that there had been no previous personal acquaintance between the two. But Whately might be excused for cherishing some serious misgivings about accepting an offer so fraught with peril and difficulty—"a call," as he himself put it, "to the helm of a crazy ship in a storm." It was only a sense of duty which made him consent to the elevation.

The same forgetfulness which left him textless when he rose to preach his first sermon, made him neglect to resign his living at Halesworth before coming over to Ireland to be consecrated, and the ceremony had to be postponed. It took place at last on 23rd October 1831.

Whately set about the work of his new office with his usual earnestness. There were many difficulties to contend with. For various reasons, some political, some theological, his appointment to the see of Dublin was not generally popular, so that, in addition to the troubles with which he was beset, owing to the state of the country and the Church, he was further heavily handicapped by having to live down prejudices which came to Ireland before him. But, true to his character, he took no pains to conciliate any one. He kept on his own path, regardless alike of smiles and frowns, intent on one thing only, the doing of what he regarded as his duty.

The new system of National Education, which came to Ireland in the same year as Whately, found in him one of its most strenuous supporters. Its object was to provide for the efficient education of Irish children under the supervision of the State, and its distinctive principle was combined secular and separate religious instruction. Whately believed such a plan to be admirably suited to the peculiar circumstances of Ireland, and threw his whole strength into the working of it out. He gave special attention to the preparation of school-books for the new schools, writing several of them himself. One such deserves particular mention here, not only for its own sake, but on account of the issues to which it led—a small manual of the *Evidences of Christianity*, suited to the capacity of children, on which he spent no little time and care. When it was laid on the table of the Board, its use was unanimously sanctioned, the Roman Catholic archbishop of Dublin, Dr. Murray, thoroughly approving of it along with the other members.

Of course, in Dublin, he was necessarily brought face to face with the Roman Catholic controversy, in which, however, he had taken a deep interest long before his elevation to the episcopate. An anecdote related by his friend, Bishop Hinds, gives us an idea of the characteristic mode, decided and uncompromising, yet kindly and considerate, in which he was in the habit of conversing with persons who differed from him on religious matters. "Whately and I," says the bishop, "started from Oxford early one morning in the winter of 1813, by a Birmingham coach, to visit our friends the Boultbees at Springfield. Our travelling companions inside the coach were two strangers, a man and a woman. The man was full of fun and frolic, and for some time made himself merry at the expense of the woman, having detected her in the act of slyly putting to her lips a bottle of some comforting drink with which she had provided herself. From her he turned upon Whately, observing, as the daylight increased, that he had the appearance of being clerical or academical. 'I suppose, sir,' said he, 'that you are one of the gentlemen who teach at Oxford?' Whately nodded assent. 'I don't care,' he continued, 'who knows it, but I am a Catholic.' No reply. 'Well, sir, I'll tell you what my religious principle is. My wife is one of you, and I have a servant who is a Dissenter. When Sunday comes round, I see that my wife goes to her place of worship, my servant to hers, and I go to mine. Is not that the right religious principle?'

"*Whately*. 'Yes, but I do not mean by that that you are right in being a Roman Catholic.'

"*Stranger.* 'Ay, you don't like our praying to the Virgin Mary and to the saints.'

"*Whately.* 'That is one thing; but I must own that there is something to be said for your doing so.'

"*Stranger.* 'To be sure there is!'

"*Whately.* 'You, I guess, are a farmer?'

"*Stranger.* 'Yes, sir, and no farm is in better order than mine in all Oxfordshire.'

"*Whately.* 'If your lease was nearly run out, and you wanted to have it renewed on good terms, I daresay you would ask any friend of your landlord, any of his family, or even his servants—any one, in short, to say a good word for you?'

"*Stranger.* 'You have hit it: our praying to the Virgin and to the saints to intercede for us is the same thing—it is but natural and reasonable.'

"*Whately.* 'Now suppose your landlord had one only son, a favourite, and he gave out that whoever expected any favour from him must ask that son, and no one else, to intercede for him—what then?'

"*Stranger.* 'Oh, that would alter the case. But what do you mean by that?'

"*Whately.* 'I mean that God has declared to us by His word, the Bible, that there is *one* Mediator between God and men, the man Christ Jesus.'

"*Stranger.* 'And is that in the Bible?'

"*Whately.* 'It is; and when you go home, if you have a Bible, you may look into it yourself and see.'

"After a pause the farmer said, 'Well, sir, I'll think over that; but——'

"The discussion lasted until we were near Banbury, where we parted company. The farmer, on quitting, having noticed that Whately had a fowling-piece with him, held out his hand to him and said, 'I am so-and-so, and live at such-and-such a place, not far from this; if you will come and spend a few days with me, I will get you some capital shooting, and I'll be right glad to see you. Now you'll come, won't you?' They never met again."

The terrible Irish famine of course could not fail to touch a man of Whately's great heart to the core. He gave munificently to the relief of the starving people. It is believed that his contributions amounted to something like £8000. He saved nothing out of the large income of the archbishopric, and died none the richer for having held it.

Between the work of his see, the constant employment of his pen, the business of the National Board of Education, and other public concerns, Whately's hands were kept constantly full. But by his rigid economy of time and systematic mode of doing everything, he was able to get through an enormous amount of business. He was always up early, and even while dressing was busy planning his work for the day. An hour before breakfast was usually given to the garden. Sometimes he would be seen digging, with his coat off, sometimes grafting or budding or inarching, operations in which he took great delight. One of his special pleasures was the combination of one species of plant with another by "approach-grafting." His grounds were full of specimens of his skill in this operation. During the busiest day he would snatch an occasional half-hour for his outdoor work. An amusing story is told illustrative of his enthusiasm for it.

One day a doctor was called in to consult with the family medical attendant, in consequence of the illness of some member of the archbishop's household. It was the dead of winter, and the ground was covered deeply with snow. Knowing Whately's character for humanity, the stranger expressed much surprise, as he drove up the avenue in the dusk, at seeing an old labouring man stripped to his shirt felling a tree in the demesne, while a heavy shower of sleet drifted pitilessly in his wrinkled face.

"That labourer," said the family physician, "whom you think the victim of prelatical despotism, is no other than the archbishop curing himself of a headache. When he has been reading or writing more than usual, and finds any pain or confusion about the cerebral organisation, he rushes out with an axe and slashes away at some ponderous trunk. As soon as he finds himself in a profuse perspiration, he gets into bed, wraps himself in Limerick blankets, falls into a sound sleep, and gets up buoyant."

As yet we have scarcely mentioned what was one of the archbishop's best-known characteristics—his unbounded love of fun. There was nothing which he enjoyed more than indulging in witticisms of all kinds, not unfrequently making a jest the vehicle of inculcating wholesome truth. It is well to caution the reader, however, against receiving, as genuine ebullitions of his genius, all that has been attributed to him. His reputation for wit made him a constant peg for hanging all sorts of jokes upon, good, bad, and indifferent. With a charming air of pathetic resignation he used to say, "I ought to walk about with my back chalked 'Rubbish shot here.'"

Very frequently he at once gratified his own love of pleasantry and taught a wholesome lesson by assuming for the nonce the character of an advocate of some cause with which he had no sympathy, but with the arguments in favour of which he wished his clergy to be thoroughly conversant, and then calling on them to reply to his reasoning. The usual result was that his hearers begged him to relieve their minds by answering himself.

At times, too, he amused himself by suggesting characteristic plans for the rectification of abuses. This practice began early with him. When living at Oxford, and obliged to travel frequently between that city and Bath, where his mother resided, there was an inn nearly midway on the journey, where the coach usually stopped, and the landlord was in the habit of so delaying the passengers' breakfast or luncheon that usually they had to go on their way leaving the repast they had paid for untasted. We shall allow Whately to tell the story of how he redressed this most annoying grievance. He says, "I determined at last that I would not suffer this. As soon as the coach stopped to change horses, I ran across to a small inn on the opposite side, and engaged the people to prepare some refreshment as quickly as possible. Seeing that the change might benefit them, they were wonderfully prompt. Next time we passed, I spoke of this to my companions, and persuaded one or two to come with me and get breakfast where it could be had in time. Each journey brought more and more of the passengers to my side, and at last, one memorable day, the whole party of travellers, insides and outsides, repaired to the opposition inn. The victory was gained, the coach thenceforth put up there, and the rival house was effectually put down."

On 25th April 1860, Whately sustained a great blow by the death of his wife. For thirty-eight years she had been his inseparable companion and busy helper. The two were each other's complementaries, for Mrs. Whately had qualities in which the archbishop was deficient, as he had talents which she lacked. One of his wise sayings was, "Two people who are each of an unyielding temper will not act well together, and people who are both of them of a very yielding temper will be likely to resolve on nothing, just as stones without mortar make a loose wall, and mortar alone no wall. So says the proverb:

Hard upon hard makes a bad stone wall,
But soft upon soft makes none at all."

In this case, if Whately supplied the stones, his wife certainly furnished the cement to bind the whole domestic edifice beautifully and firmly together. His grief at her death was extreme. While the end was coming, we are told that he sat on the stairs outside her bedroom door, quite unmanned and weeping like a child. The trouble was all the more keenly felt because, like most troubles, it did not come singly. His youngest daughter, a bride of scarcely four months, was carried to the grave a month before her mother.

Two years later Whately's own health gave way. An affection of the leg, which had annoyed him for some time, made serious progress, notwithstanding all efforts to keep it in check. He was a firm believer in homœopathy, and was treated for his ailment according to its principles. For a time he recovered, but in 1863 another bad attack came on. The pain which he suffered at intervals was excruciating. To use his own description, it was as if "red-hot gimlets were being put into the leg." One day he said, with tears in his eyes, to a clergyman who called to see him, "Have you ever preached a sermon on the text—'Thy will be done'?" On receiving an affirmative reply, he answered, "How did you expound it?" An account of the explanation having been given—"Just so," said Whately, "that is the meaning." But, in a voice choked with tears, he added, "It is hard, very hard, sometimes to say it."

It soon became evident that no efforts could save his life, and, indeed, he was not anxious that it should be saved. As is often the case, his sickness mellowed him greatly. "We had not known," one tells us who knew him well, "all his claims on our affectionate regard until his tedious and painful illness revealed many a gentler grace for the display of which there had been no opportunity before." It revealed, too, something far more valuable, a simplicity of faith in his Redeemer as sincere as it was strong.

"Well, your Grace," said one of his clergy to him one day, "it is a great mercy that though your body is so weak your intellect is vigorous still."

"Talk to me no more about intellect," was the reply, "there is nothing for me now but Christ."

On another day he asked his domestic chaplain to read to him the eighth chapter of Romans. After doing so, the chaplain said, "Shall I read any more?" "No," he replied, "that is enough at a time. There is a great deal for the mind to dwell on in that." This was a favourite chapter with him, as it is with most earnest souls. He found special comfort in the 32nd verse—"He that spared not His own Son, but delivered Him up for us all, how shall He not with Him also freely give us all things?" But, indeed, no matter what part of the Bible was read to him, he enjoyed it, saying frequently, "Every chapter you read seems as if it had been written on purpose for me." The fear of death was quite taken away from him. One day, when there was a fresh hemorrhage from the leg, the doctor, who had been hastily summoned, said—"I think we can stop it, my lord." "I am afraid so," was the unexpected reply. On another occasion, when he was asked if there was anything he wished for, "I wish for nothing," he replied, "but death." Happily, great as was the agony he endured, his mind continued clear and calm as ever. One night the beautiful words in Philippians iii. 21 were quoted to him, "Who shall change our vile body so that it may be fashioned like unto His own glorious body." "Read the words," said Whately. They were read to him from the Authorised Version, but he repeated—"Read His own words." The literal translation of the verse was given him, which has since been embodied in the Revised Version —"Who shall fashion anew the body of our humiliation." "That's right," said the sufferer, "nothing that He made is vile."

At length, on the morning of 8th October 1863, the end came. With the members of his family round his bed, his eldest daughter kneeling by his side and whispering appropriate passages of Scripture in his ear, Whately drew his last breath. The remains were buried in St. Patrick's Cathedral, Dublin, amid deep and general lamentation.

Undoubtedly, when Whately died, one of the greatest intellects of the century passed from us. Ireland especially lost in him one of the truest friends she ever had. She gave him a cold greeting when he landed on her shores. For long, many of her people regarded him with scarce-concealed suspicion and heaped obloquy upon his head; yet, for thirty-two years, her interests were uppermost in his thoughts. In some things which he devised and did on her behalf he may have been mistaken. But his allegiance to what he believed to be the truth, and his devotion to the cause of Ireland, were alike unquestionable. A man of wide grasp of thought, generous, conscientious, deeply anxious to serve his generation, honest to a fault, liberal-minded, a man of strong convictions, which he was never ashamed nor afraid to avow, no matter what the cost, if his manner was sometimes brusque and his speech abrupt, if his views on some points, such as the Sabbath and some other questions, dear to many Christian hearts, were objectionable, and excited keen opposition, as they did, he was at all events an honest lover of the truth for the truth's sake, and one who, according to the light that was in him, tried to serve faithfully God and man during his sojourn on earth. The sentiment embodied in a remark which he once made about himself is as Whateleian as the terse, epigrammatic style in which it was put—"Any man who tries to imitate me is sure to be unlike me in the important circumstance of being an imitator, and no one can think as I do who does not think for himself."

CHARLES HADDON SPURGEON

(1834–1892)

By
F. B. Meyer, B.A.

KELVEDON is a quiet village in Essex, possessing a picturesque appearance, because of the quaintness of its houses and the calm routine of its ordinary life. When the present writer passed through it one afternoon, the whole population appeared to have deserted it; and the presence of two or three in the principal thoroughfare threatened to create an unusual crowd. There, on 19th June 1834, in a cottage which is now used as a lodging-house for travellers, was born one who was destined to invest this old-world place with the fascination which life always casts around the material abodes of men. People often turn aside from the highways of the world to visit the birthplace of Charles Haddon Spurgeon.

His father, John Spurgeon, who was equally efficient at conducting his business during the week and ministering regularly to a stated congregation of villagers on the Lord's Day, was a man of strong character and unimpeachable integrity. In after years he was brought into considerable prominence by the success of his brilliant son, gave up his business and became minister at Fetter Lane, Holborn, and afterwards of the Independent Church worshipping in the Upper Street, Islington.

But it was to his mother that the great preacher owed most of the influences that made him what he was. This was admitted to an American minister by the Rev. John Spurgeon himself. "I had been from home a great deal," he said, "trying to build up weak congregations, and felt that I was neglecting the religious training of my own children while I toiled for the good of others. As I returned home with these feelings, I opened the door, and was surprised to find none of the children about the hall. Going quietly up the stairs, I heard my wife's voice. She was engaged in prayer with the children around her. I heard her pray for them one by one by name. She came to Charles, and specially prayed for him, for he was of high spirit and daring temper. I listened until she had finished her prayer, and I felt and said, 'Lord, I will go on with Thy work. The children will be cared for.'"

How much of his after success may be attributable to the influence of his mother's prayers! They are referred to in at least one amusing passage of arms between mother and son, in which she said, "Ah, Charlie, I have often prayed that you might be saved, but never that you should become a Baptist." To which he replied, "God has answered your prayer, mother, with His usual bounty, and given you more than you asked." Thrift, self-denial, contentment with a frugal lot, the touch of a quaint humour, and a godly training, were among the earliest impressions which the family of ten children received in that quiet home at Kelvedon.

When old enough to leave home, Charles was removed to the manse at Stambourne, the residence of his grandfather, the Rev. James Spurgeon, who had ministered to the Independent Church there since

May 1811. There must be something specially health-giving in that Essex air, for ministers at least, since the church had only had four pastors in the course of two hundred years.

The house itself has been replaced by a more modern dwelling, but the vivid memory of what it was lived unimpaired in that mind whose earliest impressions were set in these surroundings, as a picture in a frame: the spacious hall, innocent of carpet, with its fireplace and painting of David and Goliath; the brick floor carefully sprinkled with fresh sand; the best parlour with roses growing about its windows, and thrusting their buds between wall and window-frame, the portraits of ancestors around the room, and, on the mantelpiece, the famous bottle with its apple inside, to furnish in after days so fresh an illustration of the value of early training; the dairy at the back of the house; the sitting-room with its pleasant outlook down the garden paths, its commodious fireplace, and its mysterious kitchen-jack; the upper rooms with their uneven floors, the old chintz bed furniture, and the chirp of birds who built their nests in the eaves, and found their way into the rooms; and last, but most, the study, dark enough as to the light of day, but full of books, the Puritans, the Martyrs, Bunyan, and many others worthy to be classed amongst those enumerated in Hebrews xi., appropriate indeed to mould the life and thought of the growing boy.

The garden of the manse contained a tall thick yew hedge which formed two sides of a square, eighty-six yards in length, and sheltering a broad grass walk which furnished the occupant of the manse with a still retreat for prayer. In front of the house the garden was bounded by a laurel hedge, within which stood two large antique yew trees, each cut into a fantastic shape and so trimmed as to make arbours. It was beneath the shelter of one of these trees that an incident occurred which must have exercised a strong influence on the lad, then quite young.

The Rev. R. Knill, a saintly man, had come to preach at Stambourne for the London Missionary Society at the Sunday services. He was especially attracted by children, and when he heard the grandchild of his host read the Bible with charming emphasis, his heart went out to the boy, and an agreement was made that they should go round the garden together on the following morning before breakfast. They talked together much of Christ and of His service, and presently they knelt together in the great yew arbour, and the man of God poured out a stream of intercession for his youthful friend as they knelt together, arms intertwined.

Before he left the manse, Mr. Knill uttered a remarkable prophecy destined to be literally fulfilled. Calling the family together, he drew the child to his knee and said, " I do not know how it is, but I feel a solemn presentiment that this child will preach the Gospel to thousands, and God will bless him to many souls. So sure am I of this, that when my little man preaches in Rowland Hill's Chapel, as he will do one day, I should like him to promise me that he will give out the hymn commencing—

> God moves in a mysterious way,
> His wonders to perform."

That declaration was fulfilled, and the hymn was afterwards sung on Mr. Spurgeon's first visit to Surrey Chapel and to Mr. Hill's first chapel at Wootton-under-Edge. The time of conversion was not yet, but the prayer and the prophecy were germs destined to bear a hundredfold.

Mr. Spurgeon's grandfather was remarkable as a man and as a preacher of the Gospel. He was educated at Hoxton Academy, and continued to preach till his death in February 1864, in the eighty-eighth year of his age. He was very devoted to his grandson, and the two must have made a remarkable pair. "It was his custom to allow him to read the Scriptures at family worship; and strangers who were occasionally present were wont to remark on the unerring correctness with which the youthful reader went through the exercise."

The days must have passed away interestingly enough. Sometimes the grandfather and the lad would meet the vicar of the parish at the squire's; or the fox-hounds and huntsmen would come down by Stambourne woods; or the Sunday-school festival came round, with its milder excitement. There was the week-day school, kept by old Mrs. Burleigh, and the prayer-meeting with its one tune set by the old minister, and stretched or shortened as the metre of the hymn might need; Watts's Catechism, Janeway's *Token for Children*, the *Evangelical Magazine*, given to still "the child," with its portrait of a divine and its picture of a mission station; the little shelf by the kneading trough, on which would be placed a bit of pastry by the hands of the affectionate grandmother, as something for "the child," as he was always described; the talks between the village farmers and their pastor on farming operations—all these had no doubt much to do with the formation of after years of ministry.

His father's unmarried sister Ann had most to do with "the child" during the first six years of his life, and her influence seems to have been as beneficial as it was deep. He grew up a model of truthfulness: "I do not remember ever hearing of his speaking anything but the truth," so wrote his grandfather in after days. He was remarkable also for his force of character and precocity; one instance of which has thus been given:

"When he was six years old he overheard his grandfather deploring the habits of one of his flock, who was accustomed to go to a public-house for a mug of beer and a quiet pipe. Little Charles said, 'I will kill him!' and shortly afterwards told his grandfather that he had done the deed. 'I've killed old Rhodes. He will never grieve my poor grandfather any more.' 'What do you mean, my child?' asked the minister. 'I have not been doing any harm, grandfather,' was the reply. 'I've been about the Lord's work, that is all!'

"The mystery was explained presently by old Rhodes himself. He told Mr. Spurgeon that the lad had come to him in the public-house and said to him: 'What doest thou here, Elijah? sitting with the ungodly, you a member of a church, and break your pastor's heart! I'm ashamed of you! I would not break my pastor's heart, I am sure.' Old Rhodes was angry for a moment, but came to the conclusion that the child was in the right, and went no more to the tap-room."

To be quite alone, he says, was his boyish heaven, and he used to make himself a bed of leaves, so completely covering himself that no one could find him; and when there were no leaves he would remove the side stone from a sort of altar-tomb, and creep inside, setting the slab of stone back again, so that he was completely enclosed in a sort of chamber, where no one would dream of looking for him. The secret of his hiding-place was never discovered until long years after he revealed it to his aunt, who was bent on solving the mystery.

At the age of seven the boy was removed to Colchester, because of its superior educational advantages, and went to a school conducted by Mr. Henry Lewis. There he acquired some knowledge of Latin, Greek, and French. After this he spent a few months in an agricultural college in Maidstone conducted by one of his relatives.

Before leaving Colchester, however, he passed through the greatest change of his life, which he described in after years in the following words :—" I will tell you how I myself was brought to the knowledge of this truth. It may happen the telling of that will bring some one else to Christ. It pleased God in my childhood to convince me of sin. I lived a miserable creature, finding no hope, no comfort, thinking that surely God would never save me. At last the worst came to the worst. I was miserable; I could do scarcely anything. My heart was broken in pieces. Six months did I pray—prayed agonisingly with all my heart, and never had an answer. I resolved that, in the town where I lived, I would visit every place of worship in order to find out the way of salvation. I felt I was willing to do anything and be anything if God would only forgive me. I set off, determined to go round to all the chapels, and I went to all the places of worship; and though I dearly venerate the men that occupy those pulpits now, and did so then, I am bound to say that I never heard them once fully preach the Gospel. I mean by that—they preached truth, great truths, many good truths that were fitting to many of their congregation—spiritually-minded people ; but what I wanted to know was—How can I get my sins forgiven? And they never once told me that. I wanted to hear how a poor sinner, under a sense of sin, might find peace with God ; and when

I went I heard a sermon on 'Be not deceived; God is not mocked,' which cut me up worse, but did not say how I might escape. I went again another day, and the text was something about the glories of the righteous; nothing for poor me. I was something like a dog under the table not allowed to eat of the children's food. I went time after time, and I can honestly say, I don't know that I ever went without prayer to God, and I am sure there was not a more attentive hearer in all the place than myself; for I panted and longed to understand how I might be saved.

"At last, one snowy day,—it snowed so much, I could not go to the place I had determined to go to, and I was obliged to stop on the road, and it was a blessed stop to me,—I found rather an obscure street, and turned down a court, and there was a little chapel. I wanted to go somewhere, but I did not know this place. It was the Primitive Methodist Chapel. I had heard of these people from many, and how they sang so loudly that they made people's heads ache; but that did not matter. I wanted to know how I might be saved, and if they made my head ache ever so much I did not care. So, sitting down, the service went on, but no minister came. At last a very thin-looking man came into the pulpit and opened his Bible, and read these words—'Look unto Me, and be ye saved, all the ends of the earth.' Just setting his eyes upon me, as if he knew me all by heart, he said, 'Young man, you are in trouble.' Well, I was, sure enough. Says he, 'You will never get out of it unless you look to Christ.' And then, lifting up his hands, he cried out, as only I think a Primitive Methodist could do, 'Look, look, look! It is only look,' said he. I saw at once the way of salvation. Oh, how I did leap for joy at that moment! I know not what else he said:

I did not take much notice of it,—I was so possessed with that one thought; like as when the brazen serpent was lifted up, they only looked and were healed. I had been waiting to do fifty things, but when I heard this word, 'Look!' what a charming word it seemed to me! Oh, I looked until I could almost have looked my eyes away, and in heaven I will look on still in my joy unutterable." And he adds, "I now think I am bound never to preach a sermon without preaching to sinners. I do think that a minister who can preach a sermon without addressing sinners does not know how to preach."

On 11th October 1864 he further alluded to the same event, when preaching to five hundred hearers in the chapel at Colchester (in which he was converted), on the occasion of the anniversary of that place of worship. He took for his text the memorable words, Isaiah xlv. 22, "Look unto Me, and be ye saved," and, said the preacher, "that I heard preached from in this chapel when the Lord *converted* me." And, pointing to a seat on the left hand, under the gallery, he said, "*I was sitting in that pew when I was converted.*" The Bible that lay on Mr. Spurgeon's coffin was opened at this text.

Though brought up amongst the Independents he was led, during a brief stay at Newmarket, by his studies in the New Testament to change his views on the subject of baptism, and on 3rd May 1850 he was publicly baptized in the river Lark at the village of Isleham, by Rev. W. W. Cantlow, the Baptist minister there. In a letter to his father, he said, "It is very pleasing to me that the day on which I shall openly profess the name of Jesus is my mother's birthday. May it be to both of us a foretaste of many glorious and happy days yet to come."

After a short sojourn at Newmarket he removed to Cambridge in 1851, and became usher with Mr. Henry Leeding, who had been one of his teachers at Colchester. He at once became a member of the Baptist Church in St. Andrew's Street, formerly ministered to by the Rev. Robert Hall, and joined the "Lay Preachers' Association."

The following account is given of his first sermon:— "We had one Saturday finished morning school, and the boys were all going home, when the superintendent of the association came to ask me to go over to Feversham on the next Sunday evening, for a young man was to preach there who was not much used to services, and very likely would be glad of company. That was a cunningly devised sentence, if we remember it rightly, and we think we do; for at the time, in the light of the Sunday evening's revelation, we turned it over and vastly admired its ingenuity. A request to go and preach would have met with a decided negative; but merely to act as company to a good brother who did not like to be lonely, and perhaps might ask us to give out a hymn, or to pray, was not at all a difficult matter, and the request, understood in that fashion, was cheerfully complied with. Little did the lad know what Jonathan and David were doing when he was made to run for the arrow, and as little knew we when we were cajoled into accompanying a young man to Feversham.

"Our Sunday-school work was over, and tea had been taken, and we set off through Barnwell, and away along the Newmarket Road, with a gentleman some few years our senior. We talked of good things, and at last we expressed our hope that he would feel the presence of God while preaching. He seemed to start, and assured us that he had never preached in his life, and could not attempt such a thing; he was looking to his young friend, Mr. Spurgeon, for that. This was a new view of the situation, and I could only reply that I was no minister, and that even if I had been, I was quite unprepared. My companion repeated that *he*, even in a more emphatic sense, was not a preacher, that he would help me in any other part of the service, but there would be no sermon unless I gave them one. He told me that if I repeated one of my Sunday-school addresses it would just suit the poor people, and would probably give them more satisfaction than the studied subject of a learned divine. I felt that I was fairly committed to do my best. I walked along quietly, lifting up my soul to God, and it seemed to me that I could surely tell a few poor cottagers of the sweetness and love of Jesus, for I felt them in my own soul. Praying for Divine help I resolved to make an attempt. My text should be, 'Unto you, therefore, which believe, He is precious,' and I would trust the Lord to open my mouth in honour of His dear Son. It seemed a great risk and a serious trial; but depending on the power of the Holy Ghost, I would at least tell out the story of the Cross, and not allow the people to go home without a word.

"We entered the low-pitched room of the old thatched cottage, where a few simple-minded farm-labourers and their wives were gathered together; we sang and prayed, and read the Scriptures, and then came our first sermon. How long or how short it was we cannot now remember. It was not half such a task as we had feared it would be, but we were glad to see our way to a fair conclusion, and to the giving out of the last hymn. To our own delight we had not broken down, stopped short in the middle, nor been destitute of ideas, and the desired haven was in view.

We made a finish and took up the book, but to our astonishment an aged voice cried out, 'Bless your dear heart, how old are you?' Our very solemn reply was, 'You must wait till the service is over before making any such inquiries! Let us now sing.' We did sing, and the young preacher pronounced the benediction, and there began a dialogue which led to a warm friendly talk, in which everybody appeared to take part. 'How old are you?' was the leading question. 'I am under sixty,' was the reply. 'Yes, and under sixteen,' was the old lady's rejoinder. 'Never mind my age, think of the Lord Jesus and His preciousness,' was all that I could say, after promising to come again if the gentlemen at Cambridge thought me fit to do so. Very great and profound was our awe of those gentlemen at Cambridge in those days."

From that day he began to devote all his evenings to preaching in the village stations around Cambridge, after his school work was over. In 1852, when eighteen years of age, he received an invitation to become minister of the little church at Waterbeach, six miles distant from Cambridge, to which he looked back afterwards as his Garden of Eden. The congregation soon crowded the old thatched chapel to its utmost extent; and as the result of his ministry, a great revival broke out and spread throughout the neighbourhood, the poor people became devotedly attached to him, and the boy-preacher was in great request for conducting special services in all parts of the county.

The way in which he missed receiving a collegiate education was remarkable. Dr. Angus had appointed to meet him at the house of Mr. Macmillan the publisher, with a view to consider the wisdom of his entering college. Each was shown into a separate room and waited patiently for the other. At the end of two hours the servant informed the young preacher that the doctor, unable to wait longer, had taken the next train to London. At first this was a severe disappointment, but that afternoon, whilst walking thoughtfully over Midsummer Common, he was startled as by what seemed to be a voice saying, "Seekest thou great things for thyself? seek them not." This he interpreted as meaning that God was directing him to stay with "the poor but loving people to whom he ministered, and the souls which had been given him in his humble charge."

Writing of this decision to his mother in the following November he says: "I am more and more glad that I never went to college. God sends such sunshine on my path, such smiles of grace, that I cannot regret if I have forfeited all my prospects for it. I am conscious I held back from love to God and His cause; and I had rather be poor in His service than rich in my own. I have all that heart could wish for; yea, God giveth more than my desire. My congregation is as great and loving as ever. During all the time I have been at Waterbeach, I have had a different house for my home every Sunday. Fifty-two families have thus taken me in; and I have still six other invitations not yet accepted. Talk about the people not caring for me because they give me so little! I dare tell anybody under heaven 'tis false! They do all they can. Our anniversary passed off grandly; six were baptized; crowds on crowds stood by the river, and the chapel afterwards was crammed to the tea and sermon."

The stipend, however, was totally inadequate to support the young preacher. That of his predecessor had been only £20 a year, and thus, as he admitted in his letter to the church at New Park Street, he was obliged to consider his engagement as temporary.

About this time he thought of starting a school of his own, but all such plans were summarily laid aside in view of the great life-work which suddenly opened before him. The following advertisement, however, is very interesting:—

"No. 60 Upper Park Street, Cambridge. Mr. C. H. Spurgeon begs to inform his numerous friends that, after Christmas, he intends taking six or seven young gentlemen as day pupils. He will endeavour to the utmost to impart a good commercial education. The ordinary routine will include arithmetic, algebra, geometry, and mensuration; grammar and composition; ancient and modern history; geography, natural history, astronomy, Scripture and drawing. Latin and the elements of Greek and French if required. Terms £5 per annum."

New Park Street Chapel was one of the oldest Baptist churches in London. Founded two centuries ago by Puritan Baptists, its roll of ministers contained such names as those of William Rider; of Benjamin Keach, well known for his metaphors; of Dr. Gill, the noted commentator, and of Dr. Rippon. But of late years the cause had seriously declined, and the deacons were almost in despair. Mr. Gould of Loughton, early in 1853, happened to hear the young Waterbeach pastor give an address at the Cambridge Union of Sunday Schools, and mentioned him as likely to be the very man for reviving the glories of the ancient but decayed church. As the result of these consultations, he received an invitation to occupy the pulpit which, to his eyes, was "covered with awe unspeakable." At first he thought the letter must have been meant for some one else, and returned an evasive answer; but this was followed by so urgent a request that he complied.

His arrival in London on a Saturday evening (December 1853) was vividly remembered and recalled by him in after years. He must have presented a striking appearance to the occupants of the boarding-house in Queen Square where he lodged, "with his huge black satin stock and blue handkerchief with white spots." The talk that evening turned on the great preachers of the Metropolis, the labour with which they composed their sermons, the indefatigable work demanded by their congregations, and matchless oratory which they exhibited on all occasions; and the effect on the country lad, as he was shown to his bed in a cupboard over the front door, on that dark December night was most depressing.

On the Sunday morning he found his way to New Park Street Chapel, a very cathedral as compared with the country chapel of his wont. There were but 200 persons in the spacious building which had sitting-room for 1200 people. He preached from James i. 17. In the evening the congregation was much larger, drawn partly by curiosity, partly by the youthfulness of the young preacher, and partly by his unusual style. This first Sunday led to an engagement for three months, at the wish of the young minister, who sagely remarked that "enthusiasm and popularity are often the crackling of thorns, and soon expire."

Long before the limit of this period of probation, London was ringing with his name, the chapel was thronged an hour before the time of service, and multitudes of conversions began to flood the church with new members. In every circle in London the question was being asked, "Have you heard Spurgeon?" Newspaper writers were eagerly discussing the sources of his phenomenal power and success, and the very severity of many of the criticisms made upon him only stirred to an intenser glow the popular eagerness to hear him.

In after years Mr. Spurgeon made a book of the various caricatures which from time to time appeared, and was fond of showing it to his friends. Writing about these adventures he says: "Remarks of no very flattering character appeared in various journals, and the multitude thereby increased. Caricatures, such as 'Brimstone and Treacle,' adorned the print-sellers' windows; the most ridiculous stories were circulated, and the most cruel falsehoods invented; but all things worked together for good."

Shortly after the opening of his ministry in London there was a terrible outbreak of Asiatic cholera. On all hands were anxiety, sorrow, and bereavement. The black flag could be seen stretched across the streets to warn strangers of the close proximity of plague-stricken dwellings. His services were eagerly sought for, and his time and strength were taxed to their utmost; but he discharged the duties of the emergency with a true and manly courage. A paragraph from his *Treasury of David,* on Psa. xci., most graphically describes this trying period:—

"In the year 1854, when I had scarcely been in London twelve months, the neighbourhood in which I laboured was visited by Asiatic cholera, and my congregation suffered from its inroads. Family after family summoned me to the bedsides of the smitten, and almost every day I was called to visit the grave. I gave myself up with youthful ardour to the visitation of the sick, and was sent for from all corners of the district by persons of all ranks and religions. I became weary in body and sick at heart. My friends seemed falling one by one, and I felt or fancied that I was sickening like those around me. A little more work and weeping would have laid me low among the rest. I felt that my burden was heavier than I could bear, and I was ready to sink under it. As God would have it, I was returning mournfully home from a funeral, when my curiosity led me to read a paper which was wafered up in a shoemaker's window in the Dover Road. It did not look like a trade announcement, nor was it, for it bore in a good bold handwriting these words: 'Because thou hast made the Lord, which is my refuge, even the Most High, thy habitation, there shall no evil befall thee, neither shall any plague come nigh thy dwelling.' The effect upon my heart was immediate. Faith appropriated the passage as her own. I felt secure, refreshed, girt with immortality. I went on with my visitation of the dying in a calm and peaceful spirit; I felt no fear of evil, and I suffered no harm. The providence which moved the tradesman to place those verses in his window I gratefully acknowledge, and in the remembrance of its marvellous power I adore the Lord my God."

From 11th February to 27th May 1855, during the enlargement of New Park Street Chapel, Exeter Hall was taken, and was filled to overflowing each Sunday morning. The Strand was blocked week after week with the crowds that were eager to attend his ministrations, and obviously this had a large effect in increasing his popularity and bringing him under the notice of the newspaper press. Every critic of those early days speaks of his boyishness, "the round-faced country youth, who addressed himself to his onerous duties with a gravity, self-possession, and vigour that proved him well fitted for the task." The round and beardless face; the low forehead, surmounted by the dark hair parted in the centre; the heavy face lighted up by the thought which he expressed; the bright eyes twinkling with humour; and the action in complete union with the sentiments—all are successively noticed; and all unite in eulogium of that wonderful voice, so full and sweet and musical as to awaken a response in every soul that could be touched by sound. That voice stood nearly forty years of incessant use with very little loss to either its music or its power. It was sweet as a flute and powerful as an organ; it could whisper and thunder, it was pleasant in a chamber, and could easily command congregations of 20,000 people. He spoke to as many as 24,000 in the Crystal Palace on the occasion of the National Fast. Twelve thousand have distinctly heard every sentence uttered in the open air, and for five successive Sundays he filled the vast Agricultural Hall at Islington.

In the summer the congregation returned from Exeter Hall to New Park Street Chapel, which had been enlarged to the utmost capacity of its site. But it was hardly more capable than before of accommodating the immense audiences that thronged to hear him. A year later he resumed his services at Exeter Hall, but only for a time, as the proprietors declined to allow the use of it for continuous religious services, and the deacons were obliged to take the largest available building in London, the Royal Surrey Gardens Music Hall, where from October 1856 Mr. Spurgeon continued to preach till within fifteen months of the Metropolitan Tabernacle being opened.

The services, however, were nearly brought to a termination by a panic, which occurred there as the result of a false cry of fire; this caused a fearful rush to the doors, many persons were thrown down on the stone steps, and several were trampled to death by the crowd. The shock to Mr. Spurgeon's nervous system was so great that for some time he was unable to preach. His father once told the present writer that he had to be conveyed away in a prostrate condition to the house of a friend, and that it seemed as if reason itself would desert her throne, until, one day walking in the garden, the text flashed upon his mind, "Him hath God highly exalted." And in his conception of the ultimate supremacy of Christ he found the restorative which turned the tide of the current of his sorrowful thoughts and enabled him to resume his work.

The following account was given in the *Times* in reference to the ordinary doings at the Royal Surrey Gardens :—"Fancy a congregation consisting of 10,000 souls streaming into the hall, mounting the galleries, humming, buzzing, and swarming—a mighty hive of bees—eager to secure at first the best places, and at last any place at all. After waiting more than half an hour—for if you wish to have a seat you must be there at least that space of time in advance—Mr. Spurgeon ascended his tribune. To the hum and rush and trampling of men succeeded a low, concentrated thrill and murmur of devotion, which seemed to run at once, like an electric current, through the breast of every one present, and by the magnetic charm the preacher held us fast bound for about two hours."

The service attracted large numbers of the highest and noblest in the land.

Dr. Livingstone, after hearing him on one occasion, remarked that no religious service he ever remembered had so deeply impressed his own mind as that he had witnessed and participated in that morning, and added that when he had retired again into the solitudes of Africa, no scene he had ever witnessed would afford him more consolation than to recall the recollection that there was one man God had raised up who could so effectively and impressively preach to congregated thousands, whilst he should have to content himself by preaching to units, or at most tens, under the tropical sky of Africa. He implied at the same time that Mr. Spurgeon's sphere of religious influence was a hundred times greater than that which had been entrusted to him. A sermon of his own, discovered among the last effects of Dr. Livingstone, and marked "Very good, D. L.," was greatly treasured by Mr. Spurgeon, to whom the relatives of the great explorer returned it.

In 1856 Mr. Spurgeon married Miss Susanna Thompson, daughter of Mr. Robert Thompson, of Falcon Square, London, so honoured by all as his most devoted and efficient helpmeet.

We have no right to invade the sanctities of domestic privacy, it is enough to quote the language of one who has a right to speak, that Mr. Spurgeon's home life was ideal; no one could be an hour under his roof without perceiving the fragrance of domestic affection that pervaded the house.

It is impossible to reproduce the brightness which, when he was in good health, Mr. Spurgeon threw around him. He had an inexhaustible store of incidents in his memory, and an irrepressible fund of good-humour and wit. There were times when he suffered from terrible depression, the result of nervous overstrain, and perhaps the premonitory symptom of the disease from which he died. But when his heart was at leisure from itself he was a most delightful companion. His humour was like summer lightning that illumines but does not injure, or like the genial sunshine that sparkles on the waves far out at sea, tipping them with light. He never needed to make jokes; they bubbled naturally from his strong, happy, humorous soul.

It was this that made his conferences so refreshing. "The dominant and generous personality of the president" was diffused like a fresh breeze over the whole assembly; whilst his merriment at the social meals, and his cheery welcome to his guests, contributed to make the gathering so attractive that no one was willingly absent.

In October 1856 the first meeting was held to start a fund for the erection of a place of worship sufficiently large to accommodate the vast church and congregation, which had now acquired a certain amount of stability. Many regarded it as very unwise to provide sittings for a permanent congregation of 5000 persons, but the result thoroughly justified the outlay of £31,000 which was required, and was largely raised by Mr. Spurgeon himself, who preached in all parts of England, taking half of every collection for the great purpose he had at heart. The site, near the Elephant and Castle, cost £5000. The memorial stone was laid by Sir S. M. Peto, on 16th August 1859, and the building was opened free from debt in March 1861. From the commencement of his ministry till his death the Tabernacle was thronged, aisles, passages, doorways, with a multitude, which often amounted to 5500 or even 6000 people. None who was privileged to be present at one of those services can ever forget the spectacle.

For more than half an hour before the time of commencing, the seatholders, and those who contributed to special boxes placed at the side gates, were entering the building by various doors, and taking their places, so that at five minutes before the time for service the huge place would seem two-thirds full. Then at a given signal the great front doors, at which a crowd had been gathering that sometimes reached down the steps to the street, were thrown open, and the people surged in, rapidly filling first every seat, and then every square foot of standing room.

The service always opened with a short prayer; the singing was led by a precentor, and often would be guided or corrected as to time by the pastor's words; the reading was accompanied by a number of striking comments, which some of his hearers appreciated as much as any part of the service; and the sermon generally lasted about fifty minutes.

Mr. Spurgeon's method of preparing for the pulpit was a remarkable one. It was his habit for many years to spend Saturday afternoon with his friends in bright and cheery intercourse. The present writer will never forget one memorable afternoon which he spent alone with him at his beautiful home, Westwood. First, the quiet talk in the study, then the ramble over the farm and garden, the prayer in the summer-house, and the quiet saunter back to tea in the summer afternoon. Prayers always followed the evening meal, after which visitors left, and the great preacher set himself to prepare for his morning discourse. The text had already been steeping in his mind, and his secretary had been finding and opening up his favourite commentators, placing them on a ledge attached to his bookcases, where he could easily pass round the room and read them, culling from one and another any thought likely to help. The divisions of the sermon were then jotted down, in earlier days on the back of an envelope, in later ones on half a sheet of paper. It was a favourite motto with him that "the memory loved to be trusted." The choice of words was left to the moment; but they never failed him. He has been compared with Mr. John Bright for his flow of clear and crystal eloquence, his command of our Anglo-Saxon mother-tongue, and for speaking a language "understanded of the common people." He used to say, "It is a sin to use fine language when souls are perishing"; but constantly his unpremeditated words rose to a high pitch of unstudied eloquence.

About six months after he had become a settled minister at New Park Street, at the commencement of 1855, appeared the *New Park Street Pulpit*, published by his friend, Mr. Passmore, containing a weekly sermon; and from that time each week has seen its issue with an ever-increasing circulation. For many years it was Mr. Spurgeon's habit to devote the large part of Tuesday in each week for the careful revision of the notes taken by the shorthand writer, and he was accustomed to say that this exercise was a most valuable corrective to the dangers of impromptu speaking, and did for him what careful writing did for others.

Time would fail to tell of all the agencies that grew up around Mr. Spurgeon. But we must find space for a word or two on the College, inaugurated to train for the ministry the many earnest young men who were springing up around him, and who felt an irresistible impulse to preach the Gospel. It is said to have been started by the pastor and his friend Mr. Olney, while the two were riding in a cab together, and they contributed the first twenty guineas to its funds. It was afterwards warmly supported by his people, and the yearly expenditure of £6000 was provided in part by the gifts at an annual supper, and in part by the weekly offerings at the Tabernacle, which were made to correspond annually with the number of the years of our era. This institution lay very near its founder's heart. On one occasion he proposed to sell his horse and carriage, although these were almost absolute necessaries to him; but his friend, the Rev. George Rogers, the venerable tutor, to whose earnest labours for twenty-three years the College owed much of its success, would not hear of it, and offered to be the loser rather than that the pastor should make so great a sacrifice. Once, when he was brought to his last pound, a letter came from a banker saying that a lady, whose name never transpired, had deposited a considerable sum to be used for the education of young men for the ministry, which greatly encouraged him.

In the autumn of 1866 Mrs. Hillyard, a clergyman's widow, offered Mr. Spurgeon £20,000 for the object of establishing an Orphanage for fatherless boys. Further sums came in, to augment this nest-egg, and in the summer of 1867 the memorial stones of the houses were laid on a spacious site, which has since become covered with the buildings forming a handsome quadrangle in the vicinity of the Clapham Road. The united sums laid on the stone by the collectors that day amounted to £2200, contributed by people of nearly all the religious denominations. In Mr. Spurgeon's interest in these philanthropic agencies we have another instance of the close connection between the doctrines of grace and the maintenance of good works.

As a preacher, Mr. Spurgeon might have done nothing else than preach, and his life-work had been worthy of the highest eulogiums that have been passed upon it; but as an author he contributed nearly one hundred books to the literature of his day. His first work was *The Saint and his Saviour*, the copyright of which was sold for £50. His greatest work, that on the Psalms, which occupied him for twenty years, filled seven large octavo volumes. Some of his books will last as long as the English language, and be of constant interest and value. They are distinguished by the clearness of their style, their terse proverbs, their sparkling epigrams, their homely references, and their clear evangelical teaching. Christ! Christ! it was always Christ; and eternity alone will reveal the millions of souls that have been quickened, directed, saved, by the words of one whom they were never permitted to see or hear.

He himself says of his published sermons:—"It is a great trial to be unable to preach in the pulpit, but it is no small comfort to be able to preach through the press."

"It is my life to proclaim the everlasting Gospel of the grace of God, and it is a happy reflection to me, that through my printed sermons I shall live and speak long after I am dead. It is so many years since these sermons began to be issued (thirty-seven years, nearly), that I cannot but look back with gratitude, and forward with hope. Better days may yet come. It may be we shall live to see a reaction in favour of the old Gospel; if not, we will many of us die contending for it."

The following are the closing sentences of one of his sermons sent from Mentone during his last illness:—

"Let me very briefly tell once more 'the old, old story, of Jesus and His love.' Jesus Christ died in the stead of sinners. We deserved to be punished for our sins. Under the law of Moses there was no pardon for sin except through the blood of a sacrifice. Jesus Christ, the Son of God, is the one Sacrifice for sins for ever, of which the thousands of bullocks and lambs slain under the law were but types. Every man who trusts to the death of the Lamb of God, may know that Jesus Christ was punished in his stead; so that God can be just, and yet forgive the guilty; He can, without violating His justice, remit sin and pardon iniquity, because a Substitute has been found, whose death has an infinite value because of the Divine nature of the Sufferer. He has borne the iniquities of all who trust Him. 'He that believeth on the Son hath everlasting life.'"

Thus for nearly forty years that voice, which had been compared to the Inchcape Bell, tolling highest and deepest when winds and waves are loudest, was heard amid the murmur of London, proclaiming the unsearchable riches of Christ; whilst that clear-sighted mind, directing the many agencies which had sprung up at its summons; that humour, bubbling over with sunny wit; that hand, that strong, deft hand, preparing article, sermon, booklet, or commentary for the press, seemed to be fed from an inexhaustible source of energy and vigour.

Long spells of enforced quiet sometimes disabled him from his much-loved work, but they were borne with exemplary courage and patience, and often furnished him with topics, and thoughts that qualified him above most others to minister to the sorrowful.

Throughout these years the vast crowd still surged in and out of the Tabernacle. The Colportage Society, the Book Fund, and the press poured his contributions over all the world; the popular estimate of him as a representative Englishman grew continually; the public press, which had entirely changed its tone, quoted his opinions on all subjects with respect, whilst rumour, only too glad to damage the character of the noblest and purest, was not able to sully or blot his fair fame. Thus he became one of the two or three Englishmen whose name has belted the world, and is spoken in the language of every intelligent community.

It is gratifying to remark how the grace of God was manifest in his being so little spoiled by the extraordinary popularity which he enjoyed. It is stated that he rarely allowed an hour of his waking time to pass without prayer to his heavenly Father.

This will account in some measure for his success and his humility under it.

The last years of his life were saddened by a controversy which originated in his belief that there was on the part of very many a growing toleration of heresy and error. The climax was reached when Mr. Spurgeon finally retired from the Baptist Union, giving his reasons in very trenchant and unsparing terms. In the nature of the case these excited replies, and for some time the war of words threatened to be unseemly, but those who knew him best were sure of the complete unselfishness of the attitude which he had assumed, and fully believed him to be animated by the loftiest motives. He did not love his brethren less, but truth more. This will account for the strong expressions of which he made use, though in his general mode of controversy his manner was greatly softened from that in which he conducted it in his earlier days. His action in this particular matter, while strongly objected to by some, was warmly approved by others.

These controversies had no doubt an effect upon his health. For years he had been a martyr to a troublesome disease aggravated by his incessant labours. In the summer of 1891 he became dangerously ill, and for weeks lay at the door of death. All the nation watched around that sick couch ; royalty telegraphed for the last bulletin ; the highest ecclesiastics called at his house ; daily prayer-meetings, thronged with people, were held at the Tabernacle for his recovery ; and his health was a daily item on the newspaper notice bills. He regained sufficient health to travel with his wife to the sunny shores of the Mediterranean, where for twenty years he had recruited his exhausted energies by one or two months' sojourn, and took up his old quarters in the Hôtel de Beau Rivage, where he was accustomed to occupy a little bedroom, with its single iron bed and simple furniture, opening into a small sitting-room. At first it seemed as if he were going to recover, but all hopes were dashed with disappointment as tidings came of the re-development of the disease; and at length, as Sunday, 31st January 1892, was passing away, he gently "fell on sleep, and was gathered to his fathers."

The body was embalmed and brought to London, and the coffin was placed below the platform where he had so often stood, bearing an open Bible, and the text inscribed:—"I have fought a good fight; I have finished my course; I have kept the faith." On the first day, Tuesday, 9th February, 60,000 persons passed reverently and quietly through the building to wish their last farewell to the great preacher and philanthropist to whom they were, in many cases, under so deep an obligation. On the next, 4000 clergymen and ministers assembled to pay their last tribute of love to one of the most brotherly of ministers, the most warm-hearted of friends, one of the greatest preachers of the age; and on the Thursday, 11th February, the body was borne through throngs of people to its last resting-place, followed by representatives of all kinds of religious bodies, societies, and charities, among those present being Dr. Randall T. Davidson, then Bishop of Rochester, afterwards Archbishop of Canterbury, who pronounced the benediction at the close of the service.

THE END

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